A BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY

BOOK II and III

Dr. John Gill D.D.

A BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY

DR JOHN GILL

BOOK II and III.

OF THE WORKS OF GOD
OF THE EXTERNAL WORKS OF GOD
OF THE ACTS OF THE GRACE OF GOD TOWARDS
AND UPON HIS ELECT

PREPARED BY David Clarke FOR PASTORS AND STUDENTS OF
CHRIST CENTERED CHURCHES PHILIPPINES

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Presentation and Dedication

This new edition of Dr. John Gills, "**Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity",** is presented and dedicated to the students, pastors and teachers of Christ-Centered Church Inc. Ministries, Philippines, under the care of William Ola Poloc, its founder and senior pastor (Bishop) on the, 16th January 2020, by David Clarke, founder of Trojan Horse International (TULIP) Inc.

Brief History of the Baguio Christ-Centered Churches Ministries lnc.

Pstr William O. Poloc Sr. was released from the New Bilibid prison in August 2002, where he graduated with a Degree in Theology, and started prison ministries in his hometown Baguio City, with his wife and the aid of a certain missionary from UK , by name David Clarke, the founder of Trojan Horse International. In December 2002 they were able to baptize 22 inmates in Baguio City Jail, 9 inmates in Benguet Provincial jail, along with William's wife Beth Poloc and Josephine Ortis, along with her daughter Karen Basoon, who had all confessed their faith in the lord Jesus Christ. David Clarke returned to the UK in 2003 after his mission.

Later, God gave them a burden to open a church within the city so as to reach out to their families, relatives and the families of my co inmates who are still incarcerated at the New Bilibid Prison.

By His grace the Baguio Christ-Centered Church Inc. Stood up. As years go by God continued to bless the church by drawing more souls into it. He also bless us with a bible school to train ministers unable to study in an expensive bible schools. Graduates of our school were sent out to reach lost souls and augment Christ Centered mission churches to different places around the archipelago. As a result, by God's grace and providence Christ Centered Churches were established to the different places in the country.

God's work here in the Northern Philippines bloomed most especially here in the city of Baguio. The Baguio Christ-Centred Church is the mother church of all the Christ Centered Churches in the Philippines namely; The Pilot- Christ-Centred Church, The Kamog Christ-Centred Church, The Christ-Centered-Church Theological School(TULIP), The Christ-Centred Radio Ministry, The Christ-Centred Jail Ministries etc.). We'll, we are truly blessed by these works He has entrusted to us. To God be the glory!

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Personal note from the publisher

It is noted and remarked that this date of publication is the Golden Jubilee [1](Leviticus 25:8-13 King) of conversion of David Clarke, which took place on, 16th January 1971.

http://www.Biertonparticularbaptists.co.uk

David Clarke is the sole remaining member of Bierton Particular Baptists who was called by the Lord and sent by the church to preach the gospel in 1982. The doctrinal foundation of Trojan Horse Mission are those of the Bierton Particular Baptists Articles of religion.

View the Wikipedia Entry for Bierton and view None Conformist Place of Worship

Who Is Dr. John Gill

John Gill (23 November 1697 – 14 October 1771) was an English Baptist pastor, biblical scholar, and theologian who held to a firm Calvinistic soteriology. Born in Kettering , Northamptonshire, he attended Kettering Grammar School where he mastered the Latin classics and learned Greek by age 11. He continued self-study in everything from logic to Hebrew, his love for the latter remaining throughout his life.

Pastoral Work

His first pastoral work was as an intern assisting John Davis at Higham Ferrers in 1718 at age 21. He became pastor at the Strict Baptists church at Goat Yard Chapel, Horselydown, Southwark in 1719. His pastorate lasted 51 years. In 1757 his congregation needed larger premises and moved to a Carter Lane, St. Olave's Street, Southwark. This Baptist church was once pastored by Benjamin Keach and would later become the New Park Street Chapel and then the Metropolitan Tabernacle pastored by Charles Spurgeon.

Works

In 1748, Gill was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity by

1 8 And thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.

the University of Aberdeen. He was a profound scholar and a prolific author. His most important works are:

- The Doctrine of the Trinity Stated and Vindicated London, 1731)
- The Cause of God and Truth (4 parts, 1725-8), a retort to Daniel Whitby's Five Points.
- An Exposition of the New Testament (3 vols., 1746–8), which with his Exposition of the Old Testament (6 vols., 1748–63) forms his magnum opus
- A Collection of Sermons and Tracts
- A Dissertation Concerning the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language, Letters, Vowel-Points, and Accents (1767)
- A Body of Doctrinal Divinity (1767)
- A Body of Practical Divinity (1770)

Gill also edited and re-published the works of **Rev. Tobias Crisp, D.D**. (1600-1643).

NOTE:

We have not included the Greek, Hebrew or Latin text in the interest of economy.

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BOOK II
OF THE ACTS AND WORKS OF GOD

Chapter 1
OF THE INTERNAL ACTS AND WORKS OF GOD; AND OF HIS DECREES IN GENERAL

Having considered the nature, perfections, and persons in God, I shall now proceed to treat of his acts and operations; which are such as are worthy of a Being possessed of those perfections which have been described; and so must be worthy of our notice. God is "actus purus et simplicissimus"; he is all act; if one may so say; having nothing passive in him; and therefore must be active and operative; "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work", (John 5:17) in which words there is a term fixed, unto which God had worked, the then present time Christ spoke them; but none from whence he began to work: he had not only worked in providence till then, since the creation, and not only at the creation, but from all eternity; his active and eternal mind had always been at work; the thoughts of his heart were always employed in devising, forming, and settling things that should be done in time; and as the three divine Persons were taking infinite delight and pleasure in each other, so in the fore views of what would be done by each of them in time, for the setting forth and manifestation of their glory.

The acts and works of God may be distinguished into internal and external. The "external" acts and works of God, are such as are done in time, visible to us, or known by us; as creation, providence, redemption, &c. His "internal" acts and works, which will be first considered, and are what were done in eternity, are commonly distinguished into personal and essential. Personal acts are such as are peculiar to each person, and distinguish the one from the other; and which have been taken notice of already, in treating of the doctrine of the Trinity. "Essential" acts are such as are common to them all; for as they have the same nature and essence, they have the same understanding, will, and affections; and the same acts appropriate to these belong unto them, both with respect to themselves and the creatures they meant to make; that is to say, they mutually know one another, love each other, and will each other's happiness and glory; and have the same knowledge of, will concerning, and affection for creatures to be brought into being by them; and among these internal acts of the mind of God, are his purposes and decrees; and these are "purposed in himself", (Eph. 1:9) for what is true of one of his purposes, is true of all; and that there are such in God is certain; and which respect, not only the affairs of grace, but those of providence; even the whole earth, and all things in it, (Rom. 9:11; Eph. 1:11, 3:11; Isa. 14:24, 27) and which go by various names in scripture; sometimes

they are called, "the thoughts of his heart"; these are the deep things of God, which lie in the inmost recesses of his mind; are only known by himself, and searched by his Spirit; as the thoughts of a man can only be known by the spirit of man within him (Ps. 33:11; Jer. 29:11; 1 Cor. 2:10, 11). Sometimes they are called the "counsels" of God, said to be "of old", ancient ones, even from eternity; and to be "faithfulness and truth"; faithfully and truly performed in time, (Isa. 25:1) and their being so called does not suppose any degree of ignorance, or want of knowledge in God, or as if he was at a loss what to resolve upon; and therefore consulted with himself, or others, what was fittest to be determined on; but because such resolutions, that are taken after mature deliberation and consultation, are generally formed in the wisest manner; and commonly most successful in the execution of them; therefore the purposes of God, being made with the highest wisdom, from thence they have the name of "counsels". They are sometimes called "decrees", and so we commonly call them; being the determinations of the mind of God; what he has fixed, settled, and resolved upon, (Dan. 4:17; Zeph. 2:2) and so the "determinate counsel" of God, (Acts 2:23) sometimes they are expressed by "pre-ordination" and predestination; so Christ is said to be "foreordained" before the foundation of the world, (1 Peter 1:20) and men are said to be "predestinated" to the adoption of children, and to an inheritance, (Eph. 1:5, 11) that is, afore appointed thereunto in the decrees of God; and often they are signified by his "will" and "pleasure"; by the "counsel of his will"; and by his "counsel" and "pleasure", (Rom. 9:19; Eph. 1:11; Isa. 46:10) they containing and expressing his mind and will; what it is his pleasure should be. Now concerning these may be observed,

First, The proof to be given of them, that there are decrees and purposes in God; not merely ideas of things future, but settled determinations concerning them; which may be evinced from the nature and perfections of God. God is a Spirit, uncreated, infinite, operative, and active: he is a pure act, as before observed; and must have been for ever active in himself; his eternal mind must always have been employed, and continually at work; as the mind of man is never without its thoughts, and the understanding has its acts, and the will its volitions; so God never was without the thoughts of his heart, the acts of his understanding, and the volitions of his will. The "Sovereignty" of God over all, and his "in-dependency", clearly show, that whatever is done in time, is according to his decrees in eternity; for if anything comes to pass without the will of God, or contrary to it, or what he has not commanded, that is decreed, (Lam. 3:37) how is he a sovereign Being, that does according to his will in heaven and in earth, and works all things after the counsel of his will? (Dan. 4:35; Eph. 1:11) and if anything is

by chance and fortune, or the mere effect of second causes, and of the free will of men, independent of the will of God, and if he works under these, in subserviency to them, and takes his measures of operation from them, then he must be dependent on them; and how then can it be said with truth, that "of him, and through him, and to him, are all things?" (Rom. 11:36). The "immutability" of God requires eternal decrees in him, concerning everything that is in time; for if anything is done in time, that did not fall under his notice and will in eternity, this must be new to him, and produce a change in him; or if an after will in time arises in him, respecting anything he would have done, which he willed not before, this argues a change in him; whereas, in him there is "no variableness, nor shadow of turning". The knowledge of God, supposes and clearly proves and establishes the decrees of God; he is a "God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed", (1 Sam. 2:13) he has knowledge of all actions done in time; and such an exact knowledge of them, as if they were weighed by him, and before him; and this knowledge of them is not successive, as they are performed; "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning", or from eternity, (Acts 15:18) both what he would do himself, and what he wills to be done by others: and this knowledge is founded on his decrees; he knows that such and such things will be, because he has determined they shall be. Once more, the "wisdom" of God makes it necessary that there should be eternal purposes and decrees in him, concerning things future; he is the all-wise and only wise God, and in wisdom makes all his works; which cannot be supposed to be made without previous thoughts and determinations concerning them: what wise man undertakes a building, without first determining what it shall be, of what materials it shall be made, in what form and manner, as well as for what end? And can we imagine that the all-wise God, who builds all things, should go about them without pre concerted measures, and settled determinations concerning them; "Who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working?" (Isa. 28:29).

2. ***Secondly,*** The extent of the decrees and purposes of God, deserve notice and consideration: and they reach to all things that come to pass in the world, from the beginning to the end of it. The world, and all things in it, were created by and according to the will and pleasure of God (Rev. 4:11). The heavens, their creation, stability, duration, and passing away, and succeeded by new heavens, are by a decree that cannot pass (Ps. 148:6). The earth, in its different forms, before and after the flood, its continuance, and final destruction, with the day or time of it, are by the word or decree of God (2 Peter 3:5-7, 10). The sea, and the place the receptacle of it, and its boundary, the sand, which its waters cannot pass, are by a perpetual decree

(Job 38:10, 11; Prov. 8:29; Jer. 5:21). The rain which is exhausted out of it, has its decree; and there is not a shower falls but by the will of God; whether it be given as a mercy, to make fruitful seasons, or whether it be withheld, or poured down in too great plenty, in a way of judgment; it is all according to the word, will, and decree of God (Job 28:26; Amos 4:7, 8, 5:8). The peopling of the world; the distinction of nations; the rise, progress, and ruin of states, kingdoms, and empires, are all according to the decrees of God; even every petty state and kingdom, as well as the four grand monarchies; the destruction of the first of which, the Babylonian monarchy, as it was by the decree of the Watchers, and by the demand of the Holy Ones; that is, by the decree of the most High; so the origin of it, and its rise to all its glory and grandeur; and the same is true of all the rest (see Deut. 32:8; Dan. 2:38-44, 4:17, 20). Particularly, the people of Israel, a select and distinguished people from all others; their original from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; their servitude in a land not theirs, for four hundred years; their settlement in the land of Canaan; their government under judges and kings; and their several captivities, were all determined; as well as their last destruction, when the desolations determined, were poured upon the desolate; and so is their future conversion and restoration (Gen. 15:14; Ex. 15:17; Dan. 9:26, 27; Rom. 11:25, 26). The church of God, in its different states, under the legal dispensation; the time appointed of the Father, when it was under tutors and governors, (Gal. 4:1, 2) and under the gospel dispensation, the world to come, the time of reformation, when all things became new; the former covenant waxed old, and vanished away, and the ordinances of it, and new ones took place; and which continues to be the accepted time and day of salvation; all are by divine appointment. The persecutions and sufferings of the church of Christ under the ten Roman emperors, signified by ten days, (Rev. 2:10) and under Rome papal, for a time, and times, and half a time; even forty two months, or one thousand, two hundred and sixty days or years; the time of the church's being in the wilderness, and of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, and of the reign of antichrist, are all fixed by the decree of God; and when the time is up, the Angel will swear by the living God, that time shall be no longer; that is, antichristian time, (Rev. 10:6, 11:2, 3, 12:14, 13:5) as well as the glory of the church in the latter day; for which there is a set time; and which God will hasten, in his own time; when there will be great light and prosperity, numerous conversions, a great spread of the gospel, and an enlargement of the interest of Christ, and much purity and righteousness (Ps. 102:13; Isa. 60:1-22). In short, everything respecting all the individuals of the world, that have been, are, or shall be, all correspond with the decrees of God, and are according to them; mens coming into

the world, the time of it, and all circumstances attending it; all events and occurrences they meet with, throughout the whole time of life; their places of habitation, their stations, calling, and employment; their circumstances of riches and poverty, of health and sickness, adversity and prosperity; their time of going out of the world, with everything attending that; all are according to the determinate counsel and will of God, (Eccl. 3:1, 2, 7:14; Acts 17:26; Job 14:5) and particularly, all that relate to the people of God, as well their spiritual and eternal, as temporal concerns; their election of God, their redemption by Christ, their effectual calling, which is according to the purpose of God; the time, manner, and means of it; all their changes in life; their afflictions and distresses, deliverances, and salvations from temptation and trouble; yea, even the final state and condition of good men and bad men, is settled and determined: but this will be more particularly considered under the special decrees of God, respecting rational creatures. All that Christ was to be, do, and suffer for his people, are what the hand and counsel of God before determined; his incarnation, the time of his coming into the world; all that he met with, from the hand of God, from men and devils, while in it; his sufferings and death, and all circumstances attending the same (Gal. 4:4; Acts 4:28, 2:23; Luke 22:22, 37). In a word, everything that comes to pass in this world, from the beginning to the end of it, is pre-ordained; everything, good and bad; good by his effective decrees; that is, such by which he determines what he will do himself, or shall be done by others; and evil things, by his permissive decrees, by which he suffers things to be done; and which he overrules for his own glory; yea, things contingent, which, with respect to second causes, may seem to be, or not be, as the free actions of men; such as the prophesies, founded on decrees, concerning the names of Josiah and Cyrus, and of actions being performed by them of their own free will, many hundreds of years before they were born; nay, even things of the least importance, as well as the greatest; the hairs of mens heads are numbered; two sparrows, not worth more than a farthing, and yet fall not to the ground, without the knowledge, will, and purpose of God (Matthew 10:29, 30).

Thirdly, The properties of the purposes and decrees of God, may next be considered.

1. As they are internal acts, they are immanent ones; they are in God, and remain and abide in him; and while they are so, they put nothing into actual being, they are concerned about, until they bring forth, or are brought forth into execution: then they pass upon their respective objects, terminate on them, and issue in actual operation; and then they are called "transient" acts; and till then they are secrets in God's breast, and are unknown to men.

2. They are eternal; as God himself is eternal, so are they; for, as some divines express it, God's decrees are himself decreeing, and therefore if he is from everlasting to everlasting, they are so likewise; if the knowledge of God, respecting all his works, is from the beginning, or from eternity, which arises from his decrees, then they themselves must be from eternity; and if the particular decree of election was before the foundation of the world, as it was, (Eph. 1:4) the same must be true of all the decrees of God, which are all of a date; for no new will, nor new act of the will of God, arise in him in time.

3. The decrees of God are most free; they are the free acts of his will, without any force or compulsion, and are not influenced by any motive from without himself; as "he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy", and exercises it freely, and on whom he pleases; so he freely decreed to have mercy as he pleased; as he hides the things of the gospel from the wise and prudent, and reveals them unto babes, as seems good in his sight; he freely determined so to do: indeed, having made those decrees, there is a necessity of the performance of them; but the making of them was quite free.

4. They are most wise decrees; as God is a wise Being, and does all his works in wisdom, so his decrees are laid in the deepest wisdom; which, though unsearchable by us, and may be unaccountable to us; yet there is, as the apostle expresses it, speaking of them, "a depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God in them" (Rom. 11:33).

5. They are immutable and unalterable; they are the mountains of brass, out of which come forth the horses and chariots, the executioners of divine providence; signified by mountains, for their immovableness, and by mountains of brass, for their greater stability and firmness (Zech. 6:1-8). The decrees of the Medes and Persians, when signed and sealed, were not to be changed or altered: but these are more unchangeable and unalterable than they were: we read of the immutability of the counsel of God, (Heb. 6:17) his purposes and decrees, which, like himself, are the same today, yesterday, and for ever; without any variableness, or shadow of turning.

6. The decrees of God are always effectual; they cannot be frustrated or disannulled, or become of no effect; "For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? And his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" (Isa. 14:27). The purposes of men are often frustrated, through want of foresight, not being able to foresee what may turn up, which may hinder the execution of their designs; but no unforeseen accident can arise to put any stop in the way of executing the decrees of God; since all things are at once in his eternal view, who sees the end from the beginning: men sometimes fail of bringing their resolutions into execution, for want of power: but God is omnipotent, and is able to do, and therefore does whatever

he pleases; he is in one mind, and none can turn him; and what he desires, he does; his counsel stands, and he does all his pleasure; and the thoughts of his heart are to all generations. To say no more; the end of the decrees of God is his own glory; he has "made", that is, appointed "all things for himself", for the glorifying his perfections, (Prov. 16:4) there may be, and are, inferior ends, as the good of his creatures, &c. But his glory is the supreme end, and all others are subordinate to it.

Chapter 2

OF THE SPECIAL DECREES OF GOD, RELATING TO RATIONAL CREATURES, ANGELS, AND MEN; AND PARTICULARLY OF ELECTION.

The special decrees of God respecting rational creatures, commonly go under the name of "predestination"; though this sometimes is taken in a large sense, to express everything that God has predetermined; and so it takes in all that has been observed in the preceding chapter; which some call eternal providence, of which, temporary providence is the execution; for with God there is not only a provision of things future, but a provision for the certain bringing them to pass; and the counsel and will of God is the source and spring of all things, and the rule and measure according to which he works, (Eph. 1:11) but predestination is usually considered as consisting of two parts, and including the two branches of election and reprobation, both with respect to angels and men; for each of these have place in both. Angels; some of them are called "elect" angels, (1 Tim. 5:21) others are said to be "reserved in chains", in the chains of God's purposes and providence, "unto the judgment" of the great day (2 Peter 2:4). Men; some of them are vessels of mercy, afore prepared for glory; others vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction; some are the election, or the elect persons, that obtain righteousness, life, and salvation; and others are the rest that are left in, and given up to blindness (Rom. 9:22, 23, 11:7). Though sometimes predestination only respects that branch of it called election, and the predestinated signify only the elect; for who else are called, justified, and glorified, enjoy adoption and the heavenly inheritance? Not, surely, the non-elect (Rom. 8:29, 30; Eph. 1:5,11). This branch of predestination, election, must be considered first; I shall begin with,

I. The election of angels; of this the scriptures speak but sparingly, and therefore the less need to be said concerning it: that there are some angels that are elect is certain, from the proof already given: there is a similarity between their election and the election of men; though in some things there appears a little difference.

1. The election of angels, as well as of men, is of God; he is the efficient cause of it is God that has chosen them, and distinguished them from others, and therefore they are called the "angels of God", (Luke 12:8, 9) not merely because they are his creatures, so are the evil angels; but because they are his chosen, his favourites, and appointed to be happy with him to all eternity.

2. Their election, as that of men, lies in a distinction and separation from the rest of their species; they are not only distinguished from them by their characters, the one being holy angels, the others the angels that sinned; but by their state and condition, the one being preserved from apostasy, and continued in their first estate; the other left to fall into sin, and from their former state, and reserved unto judgment.

3. In their election they were considered as on an equal footing with others not elected, as men are; as men are considered, when chosen, as in the pure mass, having done neither good nor evil, so were angels; this must be out of all question, with respect to them, since the elect angels never fell, never were in any corrupt state, and could not be so considered: besides, their preservation from apostasy, and their confirmation, by grace, in the state in which they were created, are in consequence of their election; and therefore must be previous to the fall of the rest, who, with thine, must be considered in the pure mass of creature-ship; wherefore the choice of the one, and the leaving of the other, must be entirely owing to the sovereign will of God.

4. Their election, though it is not said to be made in Christ, as the election of men; nor could it be made in him, considered as Mediator; since they having never sinned against God, and offended him, they needed him not to mediate between God and them, and to make peace and reconciliation; yet they might be chosen in him, as they seem to be, as an Head of conservation; as an Head both of eminence to rule over them, protect and preserve them in their state; and of influence, to communicate grace and strength to them; to confirm them in their state in which they are; for Christ is "the head of all principality and power" (Col. 2:10).

5. Though the angels are not chosen to salvation as men are, as that signifies a deliverance from sin and misery: seeing they never sinned, and so were never in a miserable condition, and needed no Saviour and Redeemer; yet they are chosen to happiness, to communion with God now, whose face they ever behold; and to a confirmed state of holiness and impeccability, and to the enjoyment of God, and the society of elect men to all eternity.

II The election of men to grace and glory, is next to be considered; and it may be proper in the first place to take some notice of the election of Christ, as man and mediator; who is God's first and chief elect; and is, by way of

eminency, called his elect; "Behold, my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth", (Isa. 42:1) and often-times the chosen of God (Ps. 89:3; Luke 23:35; 1 Peter 2:4). Which character not only denotes his choiceness and excellency, and the high esteem he is in with God; who, though disallowed, disesteemed, and rejected by men, is chosen of God, and precious; but either,

1. It respects the choice of the human nature of Christ to the grace of union with him as the Son of God. God prepared a body, or an human nature for him, in his eternal purposes and decrees; in the book of which all the members thereof were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when, as yet, before there were none of them (Heb. 10:5; Ps. 139:16). Among all the individuals of human nature, which rose up in the divine mind, to be brought into being by him, this was singled out from among them, and appointed to union with the second Person in the Godhead; this was sanctified, and set apart, and sent into the world; in which Joseph was a type of it, who was separated from his brethren: and hence this human nature of Christ was anointed with the Holy Ghost above his fellows, and hail the gifts and graces of the Spirit without measure; and was raised to such honour and dignity, as none of the angels ever were, or will be (Heb. 1:13).

2. The character of elect, as given to Christ, respects the choice of him to his office as Mediator, in which he was set up, and with which he was invested, and had the glory of it before the world began. He was first chosen and set up as an Head; and then his people were chosen, as members of him; he was chosen to be the Saviour of the body, the church; as they are appointed to salvation by him, he is appointed to be the Saviour of them; this is meant by laying help on one that is mighty; and as their salvation is through his sufferings and death, he was foreordained, before the foundation of the world, to be the slain Lamb; through whose precious blood their redemption would be obtained; he was set forth, in the eternal decree and purpose of God, to be the propitiation for sin, to make atonement and satisfaction for it, and procure the pardon of it (1 Peter 1:18-20; Rom. 3:25). Christ is appointed to be the judge of quick and dead; as well as a day is appointed in which God will judge the world in righteousness, by the man Christ Jesus, whom he has ordained for that purpose, (Acts 10:42, 17:31). But what will now be chiefly attended to, and what the scriptures speak so largely of, is the election of men in Christ unto eternal life.

Some are of opinion that this doctrine of election, admitting it to be true, should not be published, neither preached from the pulpit, nor handled in schools and academies, nor treated of in the writings of men; the reasons they give, are because it is a secret, and secret things belong to God; and because

it tends to fill men's minds with doubts about their salvation, and to bring them into distress, and even into despair; and because some may make a bad use of it, to indulge themselves in a sinful course of life, and argue, that if they are elected they shall be saved, let them live as they may; and so it opens a door to all licentiousness: but these reasons are frivolous and groundless; the doctrine of election is no secret, it is clearly and fully revealed, and written as with a sunbeam in the sacred scriptures; it is true indeed, it cannot be said of particular persons, that such a man is elected, and such a man is reprobated; and especially when both appear to be in a state of unregeneracy; yet when men, in a judgment of charity, may be hoped to be called by grace, they may be concluded to be the elect of God, though it cannot be said with precision; and on the other hand, there may be black marks of reprobation on some men, or at least things have such a very dark aspect on them, that we are apt to say, when we hear a man cursing and swearing, and see him in all excess of wickedness with boldness and impudence, what a reprobate creature is this; though indeed no man, be he ever so vile, is out of the reach of powerful and efficacious grace; and therefore it cannot be absolutely said that he is rejected of God: and whereas there may be only the appearance of grace, and not the truth of it, in such that profess to have it cannot be said with certainty that such an one is an elect person, yet in charity it may be so concluded: however, a truly gracious man may know for himself his "election of God", as the apostle affirms; and that in this way, the "gospel" being "come" to him, "not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost", (1 Thess. 1:4, 5) who by means of it has begun, and will carry on and perform the work of grace in him; wherefore such persons will not be filled with doubts and fears about their salvation, nor be led into distress and despair through the doctrine of election; nor need any be distressed about it that are inquiring the way of salvation, or have any knowledge of it; for the first question to be put to a man by himself, is not, am I elected; but, am I born again? Am I a new creature? Am I called by the grace of God, and truly converted? If a man can arrive to satisfaction in this matter, he can have no doubt about his election; that then is a clear case and out of all question. The doctrine of regeneration, which asserts that a man must be born again, or he cannot see and enter into the kingdom of heaven, may as well be objected to, as that of election; since it is as difficult to come to satisfaction about a man's regeneration, as about his election; and when once the one is a clear case, the other must be likewise; and when it is, what thankfulness and joy does it produce! And if the apostle thought himself bound to give thanks to God for his choice of the Thessalonians to salvation; how much more reason had he to bless the God and Father of Christ for his own election, as he does (2 Thess. 2:13;

Eph. 1:3, 4). With what exultation and triumph may a believer in Christ take up those words of the apostle, and use them with application to himself, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" (Rom. 8:33) yea our Lord Jesus Christ exhorts his disciples, rather to rejoice that their names were written in heaven, than that the spirits were subject to them, or that they were possessed of extraordinary gifts, as to cast out devils. With great truth and propriety it is expressed in the seventeenth article of the church of England, that the consideration of this doctrine is "full of sweet, pleasant" and "unspeakable comfort" to "godly" persons: and as for the charge of licentiousness, what is there but what a wicked man may abuse to encourage himself in sin? As even the patience and long-suffering of God; ungodly men may turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, and every doctrine of it; and so this, contrary to its nature, use, and tendency. Strange! That this doctrine should of itself lead to licentiousness, when the thing itself, contained in it, is the source of all holiness; men are chosen according to this doctrine to be holy; they are chosen through sanctification of the Spirit, which is secured by this decree as certainly as salvation itself; wherefore those reasons are not sufficient to intimidate and deter us from receiving this doctrine, professing and publishing it; and the rather, since it is the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, frequently suggested and declared by them; what means else when our Lord speaks of the elect of God, for whose sake the days of tribulation should be shortened; and that it was impossible the elect should be deceived; and that God will avenge his own elect? (Matthew 24:22, 24; Luke 18:7) how clearly and fully does the apostle Paul enlarge on this doctrine of election in Romans chapter nine, eleven, Ephesians chapter one, second Thessalonians chapter two, and in other places! And since it is so plentifully declared in the Bible, and is a part of scripture given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, and is written for our learning, to teach us humility, to depress the pride of man, and to magnify the sovereign grace of God in his salvation; we need not be ashamed of it, nor ought we to conceal it; and the apostle exhorts to make our "election" as well as calling "sure", (2 Peter 1:10) but how should men do this, if they are not taught the doctrine of it; led into an acquaintance with it; instructed into the truth, nature, and use of it, and the way and means whereby it is to be made sure? I proceed then,

First, To observe the phrases by which it is expressed in scripture, whereby may be learnt what is the true meaning of the words "election" and "elect", as used in scripture with respect to this doctrine. It is expressed by being ordained to eternal life (Acts 13:48). As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed; by which ordination is meant no other than the predestination, choice, and appointment of men to everlasting life and salvation by Jesus Christ; and

from whence it appears that this is of particular persons, of some and not all, though many; that it is not to temporary privileges and enjoyments, but to grace and glory; and that faith is not the cause, but the sure and certain fruit and effect of it; and that both eternal life through Christ, and believing in him, are infallibly secured by this act of grace. Some, in order to evade the force and evidence of these words in favour of election, would have them rendered, "as many as were disposed for eternal life, believed"; but this is not agreeable to the use of the word throughout the book of the Acts by the divine historian, where it always signifies determination and appointment, and not disposition; and so by our translators it is rendered "determined" in Acts 15:2 and "appointed" in Acts 22:10, 28:23 and here "preordained" in the Vulgate Latin version, and by Arias Montanus; and besides, there are no good dispositions for eternal life in men before faith; whatsoever is not of faith, is sin; and men, in a state of unbelief and unregeneracy, are foolish and disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures; living in malice, hateful, and hating one another; without hope, and without God in the world; and injurious to good men, (Rom. 14:23; Titus 3:3; Eph. 2:12; 1 Tim. 1:13) and admitting there may be what may be called dispositions for eternal life; let a desire of it, and seeking for it, be accounted such; this may be where faith in Christ does not follow; as in the young man, who asked what he must do to obtain it; and yet, when instructed by Christ, was so far from receiving his instructions, and believing him, that he turned his back on him, and went away from him sorrowful, (Matthew 19:16, 22). Let an attentive hearing of the word be reckoned a good disposition for eternal life; this was found in many of Christ's hearers, and yet they believed not the report he made, of which he complains; and it is highly probable, that many of those attentive hearers of him, were, in a few days, among those that cried, Crucify him, crucify him, (Luke 19:48, 23:18, 21; Isa. 53:1) and after all, one would think that the Jews, who were externally religious, and were expecting the Messiah; and especially the devout and honourable women, were more disposed for eternal life, than the ignorant and idolatrous Gentiles; and yet the latter rejoiced at hearing the word, glorified it, and believed; when the former did not, but persecuted the preachers of it: from whence it follows, that the faith of the believing Gentiles did not spring from previous dispositions to eternal life; but was the fruit and effect of divine ordination.

This act of God is also expressed by the "names" of persons being "written in heaven", and in the "book of life", called, "the Lamb's book of life"; because his name stands first in it, was present at the writing of it, and is concerned in that eternal life which it has respect unto, (Luke 10:20; Heb. 12:22; Phil. 4:3; Rev. 13:8). All which shows that it is an act of God in heaven, and respects

the happiness of men there; is of particular persons, whose names are in a special manner known of God, and as distinct from others; and is sure and certain, and will abide. But the more common phrases used concerning it, are those of being "chosen" and "elected"; hence the objects of it are called God's elect, and the election; that is, persons elected, (Eph. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13; Rom. 8:33 11:7) which clearly imply, that only some, and not all men, are the objects of it; "I speak not of you all", says Christ; "I know whom I have chosen", (John 13:18) not all, but some of you; where all are taken, whether persons or things, no choice is made; if some are chosen, others are not, but left; and in this case the number chosen is but few; "Many are called, but few chosen", (Matthew 20:16) hence those that are chosen, are called "a remnant; according to the election of grace"; and those that are not chosen, the rest that are left (Rom. 11:5, 7). Wherefore the election treated of is not,

1. An election of a nation to some external privileges, as the people of Israel, who were chosen of God to be a special people, above all people on the face of the earth; not for their quantity or quality, their number or their goodness; but because such was the pleasure of God: but this choice of them as a nation, was only to some outward benefits and blessings; as, besides the good land of Canaan, the word, and worship, and ordinances of God, with others, mentioned in (Rom. 9:4, 5) but in the same context it is observed, that they were not all Israel, or God's elect, redeemed and called people, in the most special sense; nor all children of God by adopting grace; nor were all predestinated to the adoption of children by Christ: it was only a remnant of them that were of this sort, which should be eternally saved; and whom, if God had not reserved, they had been as Sodom and Gomorrah (Rom. 9:6-8, 27, 29). And so this nation of ours is selected and distinguished from many others, by various blessings of goodness, and particularly by having the means of grace; yet all the individuals of it cannot be thought to be the objects of election to special grace, and eternal glory;

2. Nor of an election to offices; as the sons of the house of Aaron were chosen to minister, in the office of priests, to the Lord; and as Saul was chosen to be king over Israel; and the twelve were chosen to be the apostles of Christ; for there were many in the priestly office very bad men; and Saul behaved so ill, as to be rejected of God from being king, that is, from the kingdom being continued in his family; and though Christ chose twelve to be his apostles, one of them was a devil: so that though those were chosen to offices, and even to the highest offices in the church and state, yet not to eternal life.

3. Nor of an election of whole bodies and communities of men, under the character of churches, to the enjoyment of the means of grace: Ephesians

1:4 is no instance of this. It is not certain the apostle wrote that epistle to the Ephesians, as to a church, but to some there described, as saints and faithful in Christ Jesus; and it is quite certain, that those who he says were "chosen in Christ", were not the Ephesians only, but others also; the apostle, and others, who were not members of that church, yet shared in that grace, and other blessings after-mentioned, and were they that first trusted in Christ; and though the Ephesians may be included, yet it is not said of them as a church; besides, the phrase of being "chosen in Christ", is sometimes used of a single person, and so is not appropriate to communities and churches (Rom. 16:13). To all which may be added, that those said to be chosen in Christ, are not said to be chosen as a church, or to be one, or to church privileges; but to holiness here, and to a blameless state, or a state of perfection hereafter; even to grace and glory. Nor is the character of "elect", given to the Colossians, (Col. 3:12) given to them as a church; for the same may be observed of them as of the Ephesians, that they are not wrote to as a church; but described by the same epithets as they are; and if they were, this might be said of them in a judgment of charity, since they all of them professed faith in Christ; and the greater part of them, doubtless, in reality were possessed of it, as a fruit and effect, and so an evidence of their election; by which the apostle enforces their mutual duties to one another. And in like manner the Thessalonians are said to be chosen of God, and to know their election of God, since the gospel was come to them, attended with the power and Spirit of God, (1 Thess. 1:4, 5; 2 Thess. 2:13) and all of them had made a profession of Christ, and therefore it might be charitably hoped they were the elect of God; not chosen merely to outward means; but, as it is said, to salvation by Christ, and to the obtaining of his glory. And when the apostle Peter speaks of some he writes to as elect, according to the foreknowledge of God, and as a chosen generation, (1 Peter 1:2, 2:9) he does not write to them, and speak of them, as a church; for he writes to strangers, scattered abroad in several countries; nor as chosen barely to the means of grace and outward privileges, but to grace and glory: since they are said to be chosen "through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus".

4. Nor is this act of election under consideration, to be understood of the effectual calling of particular persons; though that is sometimes expressed by choosing men out of the world; when they are separated and distinguished from the men of it; and by choosing, that is, calling the foolish things of the world, and by choosing the poor of it, who become rich in faith, and appear to be heirs of the kingdom, (John 15:19; 1 Cor. 1:26, 27; James 2:5) the reason of which is, because calling is a certain fruit and effect of election, and is a sure and certain evidence of it; "For whom" God did "predestinate,

them he also called" (Rom. 8:30). But then election and calling differ, as the cause and the effect, the tree and its fruit, a thing and the evidence of it. But, 2ble. This is to be understood of the choice of certain persons by God, from all eternity, to grace and glory; it is an act by which men are chosen of God's good will and pleasure, before, the world was, to holiness and happiness, to salvation by Christ, to partake of his glory, and to enjoy eternal life, as the free gift of God through him (Eph. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13; Acts 13:48). And this is the first and foundation blessing; according to which all spiritual blessings are dispensed; and is, by the apostle, set at the front of them all; and is the first link in the golden chain of man's salvation (Eph. 1:3, 4; Rom. 8:30).

Secondly, The next thing to be considered is, by whom election is made, and in whom it is made: it is made by God, and it is made in Christ.

1. It is made by God, as the efficient cause of it; God, who is a sovereign Being, who does and may do whatever he pleases in heaven and in earth, among angels and men; and has a right to do what he will with his own; as with his own things, temporal and spiritual blessings; so with his own creatures. Shall he be denied that which every man thinks he has a right unto and does? Do not kings choose their own ministers; masters their servants; and every man his own favourites, friends, and companions? And may not God choose whom he pleases to communion with him, both here and hereafter; or to grace and glory? He does this, and therefore it is called "election of God"; of which God is the efficient cause, (1 Thess. 1:4) and the persons chosen are called God's elect (Rom. 8:33; Luke 18:7). This act is sometimes, and for the most part, ascribed to God the Father, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; as he is said to bless men with spiritual blessings, so to choose them in Christ, before the foundation of the world, (Eph. 1:3, 4) and the persons chosen are said to be "elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and, sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ", (1 Peter 1:2) where the Person that chooses is not only described as the Father, but is distinguished from the Spirit, through whose sanctification, and from Jesus Christ, to whose obedience, and the sprinkling of whose blood, men are chosen by him. Sometimes it is ascribed to Christ, and he takes it to himself, "I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen", (John 13:18) this cannot be understood of Christ's choosing his disciples to the office or apostleship, for all the twelve were chosen to that; but of his choosing them to eternal life; and this is what he could not say of them all, for one of them was the son of perdition; and hence the elect are called Christ's elect; not only because chosen in him, and given to him, but because chosen by him; He (the Son of man) "shall send his angels and they shall gather together his elect from the

four winds" (Matthew 24:30, 31). Nor is the blessed Spirit to be excluded; for since he has a place in the decree of the means, in order that the end may be attained, and has so much to do in the blessings, gifts, and operations of grace, leading on to the execution of the decree; he must have a concern with the Father and the Son in the act itself, as the efficient cause of it. And this now being the act of God, it is for ever; for whatever God does in a way of special grace, it is for ever; it is unchangeable and irrevocable; men may choose some to be their favourites and friends for a while, and then alter their minds, and choose others in their room; but God never acts such a part, he is in one mind, and none can turn him; his purpose, according to election, or with respect to that, stands sure, firm, and unalterable.

2. This act is made in Christ, "according as he hath chosen us in him" (Eph. 1:4). Election does not find men in Christ, but puts them there; it gives them a being in him, and union to him; which is the foundation of their open being in Christ at conversion, which is the manifestation and evidence of this; "If any man be in Christ", even in the secret way, by electing grace, "he is a new creature", sooner or later; which is an evidence of it; for when he becomes a new creature, this shows him to have been in Christ before, from whence this grace proceeds; but these two, an open and secret being in Christ, differ in this, that the one is in time, and but a little while ago, the other from eternity; the one is the evidence of the other; "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago", says the apostle, (2 Cor. 12:2) meaning himself; who was, about that time, and not before, called, converted, and become a believer in Christ, and so had open being in Christ; and, in this sense, one saint may be in Christ before another; "Salute Andronicus and Junia who also were in Christ before me", says the same apostle, (Rom. 16:7) they being called and converted before he was; but with respect to electing grace, one is not before another, the whole body of the elect being chosen together in Christ; which is the sense of the text in Ephesians: and which is not to be understood of being chosen for the sake of him; for though they are predestinated to be conformed to his image, that he may be the firstborn among many brethren, and in all things have the pre-eminence; and unto salvation by him, that he may have the glory of it; and to the obtaining of his glory, partake of it, and have communion with him for evermore, that he may have praise from them to all eternity: yet not his merits, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, not his obedience, sufferings, and death, are the cause of election; these are the meritorious cause of redemption, forgiveness of sin, and justification, and salvation; not of election: the reasons why men are elected, are not because Christ has shed his blood, died for them, redeemed and saved them; but Christ has done all this for them because they

are elect; "I lay down my life for the sheep", says Christ, (John 10:15) sheep and elect are terms convertible, and signify the same persons, even such before they are called and converted; as appears from the following verse: now it is not Christ's laying down his life for them makes them sheep, and elect; they are so previous to that; but because they are sheep, and chosen ones in Christ, and given him by his Father, therefore he laid down his life for them. Christ himself is the object of election; he is styled God's elect; and is said to be foreordained, before the foundation of the world, to be the Saviour and Redeemer of his people (Isa. 42:1; 1 Peter 1:20). Now, though as a divine Person, he is, with his Father, the efficient cause of election; yet, as Mediator, he is the means, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, of executing that decree: men are chosen in him as their Head, and they as members of him; not one before another; he and they are chosen together in the same decree; they are given to him in it, and he to them; they are put into his hands, and preserved in him; and hence have a secret being in him, and union to him; hence they partake of all grace and spiritual blessings; they are first "of God in Christ" by electing grace, and then he is made everything to them; and they receive everything from him they want (1 Cor. 1:30).

Thirdly, The objects of election are to be next inquired after, who are men; for with such only is now our concern; and these not as under such and such characters, as called, converted, believers in Christ, holy and good men, and persevering in faith and holiness unto the end; for they are not elected because they are called, converted, &c. But because they are elected they become all this; and if they are not elected, especially until they have persevered unto the end, I can see no need of their being elected at all; for when they have persevered unto the end, they are immediately in heaven, in the enjoyment of eternal life, and can have no need to be chose to it: and all these characters put together, only amount to such a proposition, that he that believes, and endures to the end, shall be saved. But God does not choose propositions, but persons; not characters, but men, nakedly and abstractly considered; and these not all men, but some, as the nature of election, and the very sense of the word suggests: as in the effectual calling, the fruit and evidence of it, men are taken out of the world, and separated from the men among whom they have had their conversation in times past; so in election, they are distinguished from others; as in redemption men are redeemed out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; so in election they are chosen out of the same: election and redemption are of the same persons, and are commensurate to each other; they are distinct from the rest of mankind; vessels of mercy, in distinction from vessels of wrath; a seed, a remnant, according to the election of grace; and election itself, as

distinguished from the others, called the rest; while some are given up to believe a lie, that they might be damned, others being beloved of God, are chosen from the beginning to salvation by Christ; for certain it is, that all the individuals of mankind, neither partake of the means fixed in the decree of election, sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth; nor attain to the end of it, which, with respect to men, is eternal life and happiness; for all men are not sanctified by the Spirit of God; nor have all men faith in Christ, the way, the truth, and the life; nor do all men enter into life, or are eternally saved; some go into everlasting punishment. But the number of the chosen ones is not confined to any particular nation: for as God is the God both of the Jews and of the Gentiles; so those whom he has in election prepared for glory, in consequence of which he calls them by his grace; these are not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also; and who are eventually, for the most part, the poor of this world, (James 2:5) men mean and despicable in the eyes of it; and these are but few in comparison, not only of the men of the world, but even of those that are externally called; "Many are called, but few are chosen", (Matthew 20:16) they are but a little flock, it is the pleasure of their heavenly Father to give the kingdom to, prepared for them from the foundation of the world: though considered absolutely by themselves, they are a great multitude, which no man can number, (Luke 12:32; Rev. 5:9).

And here is the proper place to discuss that question, Whether men were considered, in the mind of God, in the decree of election, as fallen or unfallen; as in the corrupt mass, through the fall; or in the pure mass of creature-ship, previous to it; and as to be created? There are some that think that the latter, so considered, were the objects of election in the divine mind; who are called supralapsarians; though of these some are of opinion that man was considered, as to be created, or creatable; and others, as created, but not fallen. The former seems best; that of the vast number of individuals that came up in the divine mind, that his power could create, those that he meant to bring into being, he designed to glorify himself by them in some way or another; the decrees of election, respecting any part of them; may be distinguished into the decree of the end, and the decree of the means. The decree of the end, respecting some, is either subordinate to their eternal happiness, or ultimate; which is more properly the end, the glory of God; and if both are put together, it is a state of everlasting communion with God, for the glorifying the riches of his sovereign grace and goodness (Eph. 1:5, 6). The decree of the means, includes the decree to create men, to permit them to fall, to recover them out of it through redemption by Christ, to sanctify them by the grace of the Spirit, and completely save them; and which are not to be reckoned as materially many decrees, but as making one formal decree;

or they are not to be considered as subordinate, but coordinate means, and as making up one entire complete medium; for it is not to be supposed that God decreed to create man, that he might permit him to fall; nor that he decreed to permit him to fall, that he might redeem, sanctify, and save him; but he decreed all this that he might glorify his grace, mercy, and justice. And in this way of considering the decrees of God, they think they sufficiently obviate and remove the slanderous calumny cast upon them, with respect to the other branch of predestination, which leaves men in the same state when others are chosen, and that for the glory of God. Which calumny is, that according to them, God made man to damn him; whereas, according to their real sentiments, God decreed to make man, and made man, neither to damn him, nor save him, but for his own glory; which end is answered in them, some way or another. Again, they argue that the end is first in view, before the means; and the decree of the end is, in order of nature, before the decree of the means; and what is first in intention, is last in execution: now as the glory of God is the last in execution, it must be first in intention; wherefore men must be considered, in the decree of the end, as not yet created and fallen; since the creation and permission of sin, belong to the decree of the means; which, in order of nature, is after the decree of the end: and they add to this, that if God first decreed to create man, and suffer him to fall, and then, out of the fall chose some to grace and glory; he must decree to create man without an end, which is to make God to do what no wise man would; for when a man is about to do any thing, he proposes an end, and then contrives and fixes on ways and means to bring about that end: and it cannot be thought that the all-wise and only-wise God should act otherwise; who does all his works in wisdom, and has wisely designed them for his own glory, (Prov. 16:4 they think also that this way of conceiving and speaking of these things, best expresses the sovereignty of God in them; as declared in the ninth of the Romans; where he is said to will such and such things, for no other reason but because he wills them; and hence the objector to the sovereign decrees of God is brought in saying, "Why does he yet find fault? Who hath resisted his will?" And the answer to it is taken from the sovereign power of the potter over his clay; to which is added, "What if God willing", &c. To do this or that, who has anything to say against it? He is accountable to none (Rom. 9:15, 19, 20, 22). And this way of reasoning is thought to suit better with the instance of Jacob and Esau, the children being not yet born, and having done neither good nor evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, (Rom. 9:11) than with supposing persons considered in predestination, as already created, and in the corrupt mass; and particularly it best suits with the unformed clay of the potter, out of which he makes one vessel to honour,

and another to dishonour; on which Beza remarks, that if the apostle had considered mankind as corrupted, he would not have said, that some vessels were made to honour, and some to dishonour; but rather, that seeing all the vessels would be fit for dishonour, some were left in that dishonour, and others translated from dishonour to honour. They further observe, that elect angels could not be considered in the corrupt mass, when chosen; since they never fell, and therefore it is most reasonable, that as they, so those angels that were not chosen, were considered in the same pure mass of creature-ship; and so in like manner men; to which they add the human nature of Christ, which is the object of election to a greater dignity than that of angels and men, could not be considered in the corrupt mass, since it fell not in Adam, nor never came into any corrupt state; and yet it was chosen out of the people, (Ps. 89:19) and consequently the people out of whom it was chosen, must be considered as yet not fallen and corrupt; and who also were chosen in him, and therefore not so considered. These are hints of some of the arguments used on this side of the question.

On the other hand, those who are called sublapsarians, and are for men being considered as created and fallen, in the decree of election, urge, (John 15:19) "I have chosen you out of the world". Now the world is full of wickedness, it lies in it, is under the power of the wicked one; the inhabitants of it live in sin, and all of them corrupt and abominable; and therefore they that are chosen out of them must be so too: but this text is not to be understood of eternal election, but of the effectual calling; by which men are called and separated from the world, among whom they have had their conversation before conversion, and according to the course of it have lived. They further observe, that the elect are called "vessels of mercy"; which supposes them to have been miserable, and so sinful, and to stand in need of mercy; and must be so considered in their election: but though through various means the elect are brought to happiness, which are owing to the mercy of God; such as the mission of Christ to save them, the forgiveness of their sins, their regeneration and salvation; and so fitly called "vessels of mercy"; yet it follows not that they were considered as in need of mercy in their choice to happiness. It is also said, that men are chosen in Christ as Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour; which implies, that an offence is given and taken, and reconciliation is to be made, and redemption from sin, and the curse of the law broken, and complete salvation to be effected by Christ; all which supposes men to be sinful, as it does: but then men are chosen in Christ, not as the meritorious cause of election, but as the means, or medium, of bringing them to the happiness they are chosen to. It is, moreover, taken notice of, that the transitus in scripture, is not from election to creation,

but to calling, justification, adoption, sanctification, and salvation. But, for instance, can calling be supposed without creation? It is thought that this way of considering men as fallen, in the decree of election, is more mild and gentle than the other, and best accounts for the justice of God; that since all are in the corrupt mass, it cannot be unjust in him to choose some out of it to undeserved happiness; and to leave others in it, who perish justly in it for their sins; or that since all are deserving of the wrath of God for sin, where is the injustice of appointing some not unto the wrath they deserve, but unto salvation by Christ, when others are foreordained to just condemnation and wrath for their sins? But on the other hand, what reason also can there be to charge God with injustice, that inasmuch as all are considered in the pure mass of creature-ship, that some should be chosen in it, and others be passed by in it; and both for his own glory? These are some of the principal arguments used on both sides; the difference is not so great as may be thought at first sight; for both agree in the main and material things in the doctrine of election; as,

1. That it is personal and particular, is of persons by name, whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

2. That it is absolute and unconditional, not depending on the will of men, nor on anything to be done by the creature.

3. That it is wholly owing to the will and pleasure of God; and not to the faith, holiness, obedience, and good works of men; nor to a foresight of all or any of these.

4. That both elect, and non-elect, are considered alike, and are upon an equal footing in the decree of predestination; as those that are for the corrupt mass they suppose that they were both considered in it equally alike, so that there was nothing in the one that was not in the other, which was a reason why the one should be chosen and the other left; so those that are for the pure mass, suppose both to be considered in the same, and as not yet born, and having done neither good nor evil.

5. That it is an eternal act in God, and not temporal; or which commenced not in time, but from all eternity; for it is not the opinion of the sublapsarians, that God passed the decree of election after men were actually created and fallen; only that they were considered in the divine mind, from all eternity, in the decree of election, as if they were created and fallen; wherefore, though they differ in the consideration of the object of election, as thus and thus diversified, yet they agree in the thing, and agree to differ, as they should, and not charge one another with unsoundness and heterodoxy; for which there is no reason. Calvin was for the corrupt mass; Beza, who was co-pastor with him in the church at Geneva, and his successor, was for the pure mass; and

yet they lived in great peace, love, and harmony. The Contra- remonstrants in Holland, when Arminianism first appeared among them, were not agreed in this point; some took one side of the question, and some the other; but they both united against the common adversary, the Arminians. Dr. Twiss, who was as great a supralapsarian as perhaps ever was, and carried things as high as any man ever did, and as closely studied the point, and as well understood it, and perhaps better than anyone did, and yet he confesses that it was only "apex logicus", a point in logic; and that the difference only lay in the ordering and ranging the decrees of God: and, for my own part, 1 think both may be taken in; that in the decree of the end, the ultimate end, the glory of God, for which he does all things, men might be considered in the divine mind as creatable, not yet created and fallen; and that in the decree of the means, which, among other things, takes in the mediation of Christ, redemption by him, and the sanctification of the Spirit; they might be considered as created, fallen, and sinful, which these things imply; nor does this suppose separate acts and decrees in God, or any priority and posteriority in them; which in God are but one and together; but our finite minds are obliged to consider them one after another, not being able to take them in together and at once.

Fourthly, The date of election is next to be considered. And certain it is, that it was before men were born; "The children not being yet born - that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, (Rom. 9:11) nor can there be any difficulty in admitting this; for if there is none in admitting that a person may be chosen and appointed to an office before he is born, as there can be none, since God has asserted it of Jeremiah; "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou earnest out of the womb I sanctified thee", or set thee apart, "and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations", (Jer. 1:5) then there can be none in admitting that a person so early may be chosen to grace and glory. And this also is before the new birth, or before calling; for calling is the fruit and effect of election; the apostle says of the Thessalonians, "God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation", (2 Thess. 2:13) not from the beginning of the preaching of the gospel to them, or of the coming of that unto them; for that may come to, and be preached among a people, but not to their profit; may be without success, yea, be the savour of death unto death, (Heb. 4:2; 2 Cor. 2:16) and when the gospel first came to the Thessalonians, and was preached among them, some believed, and others did not; yea, the Bereans are preferred unto them, for their ready reception of the word; indeed, to some at Thessalonica, it came not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost; and which was an evidence of their election, and by which they might know it. But then this was only a

manifestation of their election; that itself was previous to the gospel's coming to them, and its operation on them; it was displayed therein, and thereby; but it commenced before; (see Acts 17: 1-4, 11; 1 Thess. 1:4, 5) nor was the choice of them from the beginning of their conversion, or when they were effectually called by the gospel; for that, as has been observed, is the effect and evidence of election is that according to which calling is, and therefore must be before it; "whom he did predestinate, them he also called" (Rom. 8:30; 2 Tim. 1:9). Nor is this phrase, from the beginning, to be understood of the beginning of time, or of the creation; as in (John 8:44; 1 John 3:8) for though election began to operate and display itself in the distinct seeds of the woman, and of the serpent, in Abel and Cain, the immediate posterity of the first man, and the distinction has continued ever since; yet the thing itself which makes this distinction, or is the ground of it, was long before; to which may be added, that this phrase is expressive of eternity; "I was set up from everlasting; from the beginning; or ever the earth was", (Prov. 8:23) that is, before the world began, even from all eternity; as its being inclosed by such phrases as express the same shows: and in this sense is it to be taken in the text in the Thessalonians; and it is in so many words affirmed by the apostle, that this choice of men to holiness and happiness, was made "in Christ before the foundation of the world", (Eph. 1:4) and elsewhere it is said, that the book of life of the Lamb, in which the names of God's elect are set down, and the names of others left out, was written as early (Rev. 13:8 17:8). And that this act of election is an eternal act, or from eternity, may be concluded,

1. From the foreknowledge of God, which is eternal; God from all eternity foreknew all persons and things; there is nothing in time but what was known to him from eternity (Acts 15:18). Now men are elected according to the foreknowledge of God; and "whom he did foreknow he did predestinate", (1 Peter 1:2; Rom. 8:29) wherefore, as the foreknowledge of God is eternal, the choice he makes upon it must be so too; and especially as this foreknowledge is not a bare prescience of persons and things, but what has love and affection to the objects of it joined unto it: wherefore,

2. The eternity of election may be concluded from the love of God to his people; for it is to that it is owing; "electio praesupponit dilectionem" election presupposes love; hence the apostle sets the character of being "beloved of the Lord" first, to the Thessalonians being "chosen" by him to "salvation", (2 Thess. 2:13) it is the immediate effect of love, and is inseparably connected with it; yea, is expressed by it; "Jacob have I loved" (Rom. 9:13). Now the love of God is an everlasting love; not only endures to all eternity, but was from all eternity: God loved Christ, as he affirms, before the foundation of the

world; and in the same place he says, his Father loved his people as he loved him, (John 17:23, 24).

3. It may be argued from the covenant of grace, which is an everlasting covenant, from everlasting to everlasting; in which the goings of Christ as Mediator were of old, and promises were made before the world began; and grants of grace were made, and blessings of grace provided as early; and which covenant was made with the "chosen" of God; with Christ, the chosen Head, and with his people, as chosen in him; so that if this covenant was from everlasting, and made with chosen ones in Christ, their representative, then the choice of them in him must be as early, (2 Sam. 23:5; Titus 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:9; Ps. 89:3; Mic. 5:2) and nothing is more clear than that he was set up as Mediator of this covenant from everlasting; and that his people were chosen in him, their covenant Head, before the foundation of the world (Prov. 8:22; Eph. 1:4).

4. This appears from the early preparation of grace and glory: grace was given them in Christ before the world was, and they blessed so soon with spiritual blessings in him; as they are a people afore prepared for glory, that is, in the purpose of God; so glory is the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world; which is no other than a destination, or rather a predestination of that for them, and of them to that (2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:3, 4 Rom. 9:23; Matthew 25:34).

5. From the nature of the decrees of God in general, it must appear that this is eternal; for if God's decrees in general are eternal, as has been proved from his foreknowledge of whatever comes to pass; which is founded upon the certainty of his decrees, that so they shall be; and from his immutability, which could not be established if any new thoughts and resolutions arose in him, or new decrees in time were made by him; and therefore it may be reckoned a sure point, that such a special decree as this, respecting so important an affair as the salvation of all his people, as well as his own glory, must be eternal: and, indeed, the whole scheme of man's salvation by Christ, the "fellowship of the mystery" hid in him, in which there is such an amazing display of the wisdom of God, is "according to the eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord", (Eph. 3:9-11) and which is no other than his purpose according to election, or respecting that.

Fifthly, The impulsive, or moving cause of this act in God, or what were the motives and inducements with God to take such a step as this: and these were not --

1. The good works of men; for this act passed in eternity, before any works were done; "The children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil; that the purpose of God, according to election, might

stand", (Rom. 9:11) and since this was done before them, they could never be the moving cause of it; they are the fruits and effects of it, and so cannot be the cause of it in any sense: it is owing to electing grace that any good works have been done by men since the fall of Adam; for what the prophet says of the people of Israel, is true of the whole world; "Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed", a remnant, according to the election of grace, a few, whom, according to this decree, he makes holy and good, and enables them to perform good works, "we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah", Romans 9:29 should have been like to the inhabitants of those cities, both in sin and punishment; as public and abandoned sinners, given up to the vilest lusts, without any check or restraint. Good works are what God has preordained, that his chosen ones should walk in them, (Eph. 2:10) and therefore the election of the one, and the pre-ordination of the other, must be previous to them, and they not the cause of either; the same cannot be both cause and effect, with respect to the same things: besides, there are no good works truly such, before the effectual calling, which is the fruit of election; before that they have only the appearance of good works, but are not really such, not being done in faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin; nor from love to God, which is the end of the commandment; nor in the name and strength of Christ; nor with a view to the glory of God. Men must be first created in Christ, or be new creatures in him, must be believers in him, and have the Spirit of Christ, and his grace put into them, ere they can perform good works: all which are done at the effectual calling, and not before. Moreover, God does not proceed according to mens works; nor are they the moving causes to him, in other acts of his grace; as not in the mission of his Son, (1 John 4:10) nor in calling, (2 Tim. 1:9) nor in justification, (Rom. 3:20, 28) nor in the whole of salvation, (Titus 3:5; Eph. 2:8, 9) and so not in this first step to salvation, election; for then it would not be of grace, of pure free grace, unmixed and unmerited grace, as it is said to be. And in the strongest manner it is denied to be of works, and that established by an argument which is unanswerable (Rom. 11:5, 6).

2. Neither is the holiness of men, whether in principle or in practice, or both, the moving cause of election to eternal life; it is an end to which men are chosen; "he hath chosen us in him - that we should be holy", (Eph. 1:4) not because we were holy, but that we might be so, and so denotes something future, and which follows upon it; and it is a means fixed in the decree of election to another end, salvation; to which men are chosen, "through sanctification of the Spirit", (2 Thess. 2:13) yea, the sanctification of God's elect is the object of God's decree; is the thing decreed, and so cannot be the cause of the decree; "This is the will of God, even your sanctification",

(1 Thess. 4:3) not barely the approving will of God, as being agreeable to his holy nature and holy law; nor merely the will of his precept, "Be ye holy"; but his decreeing will, or determinate counsel, that men should be holy: besides, holiness in principle and practice, does not take place until the effectual calling, and is the work of the Spirit of God in time, who calls men with an holy calling; not only to holiness, but works a principle of grace and holiness in them, whereby they are influenced and enabled, under the power of his grace, to live soberly, righteously, and godly.

3. Nor is faith the moving cause of election; the one is in time, the other in eternity: while men are in a state of unregeneracy, they are in a state of unbelief; they are, as without hope in God, so without faith in Christ; and when they have it, they have it not of themselves, of their own power and freewill; but they have it as the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit, flowing purely from his grace; and therefore cannot be the cause of electing grace: besides, it is the effect of that, it is a consequence that follows upon it, and is insured by it; "As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed", (Acts 13:48) it is proper and peculiar to the elect of God; the reason why some men do not believe is, because "they are not of Christ's sheep", (John 10:26) his elect, given him by the Father; and the reason why others do believe is, because they are of Christ's sheep, or his chosen ones, and therefore faith is given to them; which is called, "the faith of God's elect" (Titus 1:1). Faith is not the cause of calling, and much less of election, which precedes that: the reason why men are called, is not because they believe, but they are called that they might believe; in which effectual call faith is given to them, as the evidence of their election. Once more, faith is fixed as a means, in the decree of election; and therefore cannot be the cause of it (2 Thess. 2:13). To which may be added, if faith is the moving cause of election, men might be said rather to choose God and Christ, at least first, than they to choose him; whereas our Lord says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you", (John 15:16) the apostles had chosen him, but not first; he first chose them; so that their choice of him had no influence on his choice of them: but if faith is the moving cause of election, then men rather choose Christ than he them; for what is faith but an high esteem of Christ, a choosing and preferring him, as a Saviour, to all others? A choosing that good part which shall never be taken away; and of the way of truth, or of Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

4. Nor is perseverance in faith, holiness, and good works, the moving cause of election; but the effect of it, and what is ensured by it: the reason why men persevere is, because they are the elect of God, who cannot be deceived totally and finally, so as to have their faith subverted, and overthrown, as

that of nominal professors may be; because the foundation on which they are, stands sure; sealed with this seal, "the Lord knows them that are his" (Matthew 24:24; 2 Tim. 2:18, 19). Should it be said, that it is the foresight of these things in men, which moves God to choose them; it may be replied, that God's foresight, or foreknowledge of things future, is founded on the determinations of his will concerning them; God foresees, or foreknows, that such and such a man will believe, become holy, do good works, and persevere therein to glory; because he has determined to give faith to them, work holiness in them, enable them to perform good works, and cause them to persevere therein to the end, and so be saved; and what is this, but the doctrine contended for? It is no other than a decree to give grace and glory to some persons for his own glory, and to deny them to others.

The truth of all this might be illustrated and confirmed by the case of infants dying in infancy; who, as soon as they are in the world, almost, are taken out of it. Now such a number as they are, can never be thought to be brought into being in vain, and without some end to be answered; and which, no doubt, is the glory of God, who is and will be glorified in them, some way or another, as well as in adult persons: now though their election is a secret to us, and unrevealed; it may be reasonably supposed, yea, in a judgment of charity it may rather be concluded, that they are all chosen, than that none are; and if it is allowed that any of them may be chosen, it is enough to my present purpose; since the election of them cannot be owing to their faith, holiness, obedience, good works, and perseverance, or to the foresight of these things, which do not appear in them.

In short, these maxims are certainly true, and indisputable, that nothing in time can be the cause of what was done in eternity; to believe, to be holy, to do good works, and persevere in them, are acts in time, and so cannot be causes of election, which was done in eternity; and that nothing out of God can be the cause of any decree, or will in him; he is no passive Being, to be wrought upon by motives and inducements without him; for if his will is moved by anything without him, that must be superior to him, and his will must become dependent on that; which to say of God, is to speak very unworthily of him. God wills things because it so pleases him; predestination is according to the good pleasure of his will; election is according to his foreknowledge; which is no other than his free favour and good will to men, (Eph. 1:5; 1 Peter 1:2) no other reason can be given of God's will or decree to bestow grace and glory on men, for his own glory, and of his actual donation of them, but what our Lord gives; "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight" (Matthew 11:25,26).

Sixthly, The means fixed in the decree of election, for the execution of

it, or in order to bring about the end intended, are next to be inquired into; which are, the principal of them, the mediation of Christ, and redemption by him, the sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. The mediation of Christ; Christ, as God, is the efficient cause of election; in his office capacity as an Head, the elect are chosen in him, as members of him; and though his mediation, bloodshed, sufferings, and death, are not the meritorious cause of election, yet Christ in them is the medium of the execution of it; that is, of bringing the chosen ones, through grace, to glory, whereby God is glorified, and so the end of it is answered: men are said to be chosen "unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ", (1 Peter 1:2) which words, though they seem to express the ends of election, yet are such as have the nature of means, in order to further ends, the salvation of men, and the glory of God therein. Obedience may intend the obedience of Christ, both active and passive, or his subjection to the law, and fulfilment of it, both with respect to its precepts and penalty, by which men are justified in the sight of God, and so are entitled to eternal life and happiness; and to the blood of Jesus Christ are owing, the redemption of men, the remission of their sins, and the atonement of them, which issue in their salvation, and make way for the glorifying of the justice of God, as well as the grace of God in it: and the "sprinkling" of this blood, denotes an application of it to the conscience, whereby it is purged from dead works, and the heart sprinkled from an evil conscience; and which speaks peace, and yields comfort, and causes the soul to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Moreover, men are chosen to salvation, "through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth", as means to that end, (2 Thess. 2:13). The sanctification of the Spirit, is the work of grace on the heart, begun in regeneration, and carried on by the Spirit, until it is perfected by him; and this is necessary to salvation, for without holiness, even perfect holiness, no man shall see the Lord; and therefore it is fixed as a means of it, and is made as sure and certain by the decree of election, as the end, salvation itself; and, being fixed as a mean, in this decree, confirms what has been observed, that it cannot be the cause of it: and this proves that the doctrine of election can be no licentious doctrine, but a doctrine according to godliness; since it makes such sure provision for holiness, as well as for happiness. "Belief of the truth" may signify, not a bare belief of the Gospel, and the truths of it; for though they are to be believed by all the saved ones, yet this may be where neither election, nor calling, nor sanctification, ever take place; even in reprobates, and devils themselves: but faith in Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and believing in him with the heart, unto righteousness, and with which salvation is connected, and to which it is necessary, and is a mean of it; and which being fixed in the decree

of election, as such is secured by it, and certainly follows upon it.

Seventhly, The ends settled in the decree of election are both subordinate and ultimate; the subordinate ones have indeed the nature of means with respect to the ultimate one: there are many things to which the elect of God, predestinated or chosen, both with respect to grace and glory, which are subordinate to the grand end, the glory of God. So God is said to "predestinate" them "to be conformed to the image of his Son", to be made like unto him, not so much in his sonship, nor in his sufferings, as in his holiness: man was made after the image of God, this by sinning he came short of; in regeneration the image of Christ is stamped, the lines of his grace are drawn upon, and he himself is formed in the hearts of his people; and into which image they are more and more changed through transforming views of his glory; and which will be complete in the future state, when saints will see him as he is; and to this they are predestinated, and that in order to another end, that Christ "might be the firstborn among many brethren"; the brethren are the predestinated ones, who are brethren to each other; and these are many, the many sons Christ brings to glory; and he is the firstborn among them; and that he may appear to be so, he is set up as the pattern of them, to whose image they are predestinated to be conformed, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence, (Rom. 8:29) moreover they are said to be "predestinated to the adoption of children", (Eph. 1:5) which may be understood either of the grace of adoption, the blessing itself, which predestination to it is no other than a preparation of it in the purposes and decrees of God, in his council and covenant, (2 Cor. 6:18) or the inheritance adopted to, which they obtain in Christ, being predestinated to it according to a divine purpose, (Eph. 1:11) likewise they are chosen to be "holy and without blame", (Eph. 1:4) even to unblameable holiness, which is begun in this life and perfected in the other; when they will appear before the throne in the sight of God without fault, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: also they are said to be chosen unto faith; "God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith", (James 2:5) not that they were, or were considered rich in faith when God chose them, but he chose them to be rich in faith, as the words may be supplied, as well as to be heirs of the kingdom; and this end is always answered, such as are chosen do believe; "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48). Once more, the elect are chosen to obedience and good works; the text in (1 Peter 1:2) which has been already observed, will bear to be interpreted of the obedience of the elect, in consequence both of their election and their sanctification; and certain it is, that good works are what "God has before ordained that his elect ones should walk in them", (Eph. 2:10) these are subordinate ends

which respect grace, and are in order to a further end, glory and happiness, which is sometimes expressed by salvation; "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ", (1 Thess. 5:9) and again, "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation", (2 Thess. 2:13) salvation was fixed upon, and the method of it contrived in eternity; Christ was sent into the world, and came to effect it; he is become the author of it by his obedience and sufferings; this is not only published in the Gospel, but it is applied to God's elect in conversion; but the full enjoyment of it is yet to come, (Rom. 13:11) the saints are now heirs of it, are kept unto it, and Christ will appear to put them into the possession of it, and to this they are chosen, (1 Peter 1:2, 5; Heb. 1:14, 9:28) this end is also expressed by eternal life, "As many as were ordained to eternal life" (Acts 13:48). This is begun in grace now, which is a well of living water springing up to it; he that believes has it already in some sense; the knowledge of God and Christ is the beginning, pledge, and earnest of it; and it will lie hereafter in a life of perfect knowledge and holiness, and in uninterrupted communion with God to all eternity; and to this the elect are ordained.

Now all these ends, both respecting grace and glory, are subordinate ones to the grand and ultimate end of all, the glory of God; for as God swears by himself, because he could swear by no greater, so because a greater end could not be proposed than his own glory, he has set up that as the supreme end of all his decrees; he has made, that is, has appointed, "all things for himself", for his own glory, (Prov. 16:4) as all things are from him, as the first cause, they are all to him as the last end, (Rom. 11:36) and with respect to the decree of election, it is the glory of his grace mixed with justice, which is the end of it; the election of men to unblameable holiness, and the predestination of them to the adoption of children, are said to be "to the praise of the glory of his grace", (Eph. 1:4-6) that his free and sovereign grace might be displayed and glorified thereby; and that men who are the chosen generation and peculiar people, might show forth the praises of it; as, they do in part now, and will do it perfectly hereafter; for they are a people he has formed for himself both in election and the effectual calling, for this end and purpose, (Isa. 43:21; 1 Peter 2:9) his great end in election is to "make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of his mercy"; that is, the riches, the fulness, and plenty of his glorious and sovereign grace and mercy on the objects of it, (Rom. 9:23) and not the glory of his grace and mercy only, but of his justice also; for which provision is made in the decree of the means, by setting forth, or pre-ordaining, Christ "to be the propitiation", or to make atonement, "for sin; to declare his righteousness", the justice of God, "that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus", (Rom. 3:25, 26)

and so the glory of God, of his justice and holiness, as well as of his grace and mercy, appear to be great in the salvation of men; here mercy and truth meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other; and God is glorified in all his perfections, which is the great end in view.

Eighthly, The blessings and benefits flowing from election are many, indeed all spiritual blessings; it is as it were the rule, measure, and standard according to which they are communicated; the several chains in man's salvation are connected with it, and hang and depend upon it, (Eph. 1:3,4; Rom. 8:30) they need only be just named in order, since they have been suggested under the former heads.

2b8a. Effectual Calling. "Whom he did predestinate, them he called"; all the predestinated, or chosen ones, are in time called, and are called according to the eternal purpose and grace of God in election (Rom. 8:30; 2 Tim. 1:9).

2b8b. Faith and holiness, and indeed every grace of the Spirit. Holiness is both an end and a mean in this decree, as before observed, and made certain by it; faith follows upon it as a free gift of grace, and so hope and love, and every other grace.

2b8c. Communion with God. "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee", (Ps. 65:4) to come into his presence, and enjoy it in his house, his word, and ordinances.

2b8d. Justification; which is secretly a branch of it, and openly as to the manifestation of it, flows from it; "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth"; that is, the elect; who because they are chosen in Christ, they are justified in him (Rom. 8:33).

2b8e. Adoption; to which the elect are predestinated, and are denominated the children of God, being given to Christ as such when chosen in him, before the incarnation of Christ, redemption by him, or having the Spirit from him (Heb. 2:13, 14; John 11:52; Gal. 4:6).

2b8f. Glorification; "Whom he did predestinate them he glorified", (Rom. 8:30) the elect, the vessels of mercy, are "afore prepared for glory", for eternal glory and happiness; and are chosen and called to the obtaining of the glory of Christ, which the Father has given to him to bestow upon them, and which they will most certainly enjoy (Rom. 9:23; 2 Thess. 2:13,14).

Ninthly, The various properties of election may be gathered from what has been said of it; as, 2b9a. That it is eternal; it does not commence upon believing, and much less at perseverance in faith and holiness; but it was an act in God before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4).

2. It is free and sovereign; God was not obliged to choose any; and as it is, he chooses whom he will, and for no other reason excepting his own glory, but because he will; "what if God willing", &c. And the difference in

choosing one and not another is purely owing to his will (Rom. 9:18, 22, 23).

3. It is absolute and unconditional; clear of all motives in man, or conditions to be performed by him; for it "stands not of works, but of him that calleth", the will of him that calls (Rom. 9:11).

4. It is complete and perfect; it is not begun in eternity and completed in time, nor takes its rise from the will of God, and is finished by the will of man; nor is made perfect by faith, holiness, obedience, and persevering in well doing, but has its complete being in the will of God at once.

5. It is immutable and irrevocable; God never repents of, nor revokes the choice he has made; some choose their friends and favourites, and alter their minds and choose others; but God is in one mind, and never makes any alteration in the choice he has made; and hence their state is safe and secure.

6. It is special and particular; that is, those who are chosen are chosen to be a special people above all others, and are particular persons, whose names are written in the book of life; not in general, men of such and such characters, but persons well known to God, and distinctly fixed on by him.

7. Election may be known by the persons, the objects of it; partly by the blessings flowing from it, and connected with it, before observed, bestowed upon them; for to whomsoever such blessings of grace are applied, they must be the elect of God, (Rom. 8:30) they may know it from the efficacy of the Gospel upon them, in their calling and conversion, (1 Thess. 1:4, 5) and by the Spirit of God testifying their adoption to them, to which they are predestinated, (Rom. 8:15, 16) and they may be able to make it known to others by their holy lives and conversations; which is meant by making their calling and election sure, even by their good works, as some copies read, (2 Peter 1:10) since both calling and election are to be made sure, and therefore by some third thing: indeed no man can know his election of God until he is called; it would be presumption in him to claim this character, until he is born again; nor should any man conclude himself a reprobate because a sinner, since all men are sinners; even God's elect, who are by nature, and in no wise better than others, but children of wrath, even as others.

There are many things objected to this doctrine of election; but since it is so clear and plain from scripture, and is written as with a sunbeam in it, all objections to it must be mere cavil. It is urged, that God is said to be "good to all, and his tender mercies over all his works", (Ps. 145:9) which seems inconsistent with his choosing some and leaving others; but this is to be understood not of his special grace, but of his providential goodness, which extends to the elect and non-elect, the evil and the good, the just and the unjust, (Matthew 5:45) and in this sense he is the saviour, preserver, and bountiful benefactor of all men, but especially of them that believe (1

Tim. 4:10). It is observed that Christ says he was sent not to "condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved", and therefore not some only but all; but to understand this of all the individuals in the world is not true, because all are not saved; and so this end of Christ's mission, so understood, is not answered; but by the world is meant the world of God's elect, whom he was reconciling in Christ, and for whom Christ gave his life, and became the propitiation for their sins, even for all the chosen throughout the whole world, and particularly among the Gentiles. Nor is 1 Timothy 2:4 any objection to this doctrine, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth"; for all men are not eventually saved, nor do all come to the knowledge of the truth of the Gospel; nor indeed have all the means of that knowledge: but the sense is, either, that all that are saved, God wills to be saved; or that it is his will that men of all sorts and of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, should be saved; which agrees with the context (1 Tim. 2:1, 2, 7). And when it is said of God, that he is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance", (2 Peter 3:9) this must be interpreted, not of all mankind, but of the elect, to whom this and the preceding epistle are inscribed, and who are in (2 Peter 3:8) styled "beloved", and in this verse, the "us" towards whom "God is long-suffering"; now it is the will and pleasure of God that none of those should perish, but all in due time be brought to faith in Christ, and to repentance towards God: but objections from hence, with others of the like kind, are not sufficient to overturn this truth, so abundantly established in the sacred scriptures.

Chapter 3

OF THE DECREE OF REJECTION, OF SOME ANGELS, AND OF SOME MEN.

I make use of the word "rejection" in this article, partly because it is a scriptural phrase and ascribed to God, and partly because it is that act of God which gives the name of reprobate to any; and is the foundation of that character, "reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them", (Jer 6:30) and stands opposed to election, (1 Sam. 15:26, 10:24) but chiefly because the other word reprobation, through wrong and frightful ideas being affixed to it, carries in it with many a sound harsh and disagreeable; or otherwise they are of the same signification, and no amendment is made in the doctrine or sense of it, by using the one instead of the other. This doctrine of rejecting some angels and some men from the divine favour, is spoken of but sparingly in scripture, yet clearly and plainly; though chiefly left to be concluded from that of election, and from whence it most naturally and rationally follows. I shall begin with,

I. The rejection of some of the angels, which consists of two parts:

I. A non-election, or preterition of them, a passing over them or passing by them, when others were chosen; and which may be concluded from the choice of others; for if some were elect, others must be non-elect; if some were chosen, others were not; if some were taken, others must be passed by and left: that some of them are elect is certain, they are expressly called "elect angels", (1 Tim. 5:21) and consequently are distinguished from others who are not elected; or otherwise the title and character of "elect" must be insignificant and impertinent. Both these were considered alike, upon an equal foot, when the one were elected, and the other not; they were viewed as not yet created and fallen, but as lying in the pure mass of creature-ship or creability; God saw in his power what creatures of this kind he could produce into being, as he also saw in his will whom he would; and of those he could and would create, he determined to choose some and leave others, and both for his own glory; for they could not be considered as fallen creatures, or in the corrupt mass, since the elect angels never fell; and the moment they were elected, the others were passed by or rejected; and so must be under the same consideration; and consequently the election of the one, and the rejection of the other, must be wholly owing to the sovereign will of God: both these were brought into being as God determined they should, and are equally his creatures, (Ps. 104:4) and were both made pure and holy creatures, angels of light, bright morning stars, shining in the purity and holiness of their nature; for such were Satan and his angels in their original creation; the devil, our Lord says, "abode not in the truth", (John 8:44) which implies that he had been in the truth, though he continued not in it; in his allegiance and fidelity to God his creator; in his integrity, purity, and holiness, as a creature of veracity; but framing lies, he became the father of them. What he was in, but abode not in, is the "first estate", of integrity, innocence, and happiness, in which he was created, but kept it not (Jude 1:6). To some angels God decreed to give, and did give grace to confirm them in the state in which they were created; these are the elect angels, who are said to be "mighty", and to "excel in strength"; not only in natural, but in spiritual strength. To others he decreed not to give confirming grace, but to deny it to them; and which he was not obliged to give, it being what could not be challenged by the laws and dues of creation, and was mere favour to those on whom it was bestowed; wherefore the others were left to the mutability of their will, which is that weakness and folly the angels were chargeable with in their creation state, (Job 4:18) hence of their own freewill they sinned and fell, and left their habitation, (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6) what their sin was by which they fell, will be considered in course, when we come to the fall of Adam, and of

theirs; this leads on to observe the other part of the decree respecting them.

2. The appointment of them to wrath and damnation; in this they were viewed as sinful, fallen creatures; this decree is meant by their being "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day", (Jude 1:6; 2 Peter 2:4) for by chains are meant the purposes and decrees of God, by which they are bound and held fast, and from which they cannot loose themselves; and as the decrees of God are called "mountains of brass", (Zech. 6:1) so they may be called chains of iron and brass for the same reasons; namely, their firmness, mutability, and duration; they are "everlasting" chains, and in these they are reserved under darkness; meaning either the state of darkness in which they are, being deprived of that light and knowledge they had; and also being under horror and black despair, without the least gleam of the light of joy and comfort; or that state of darkness to which they are appointed and reserved, even that "blackness of darkness" to which the wandering stars, as these may be said to be, are reserved, (Jude 1:13) and moreover they are appointed and reserved "to the judgment of the great day", to the great day of the last judgment; when they will be brought forth in chains before the judgment seat of Christ, and will have their final sentence passed and executed on them, which as yet seems not to have been done, (Matthew 8:29) then will Christ sit on the throne of judgment, and saints will stand by, together with the good angels, as approvers of the righteous sentence: and therefore saints are said to "judge angels", as well as the world of the ungodly, (1 Cor. 6:2, 3) that is, the evil angels, to which judgment they are appointed by the decree of God; and to endure eternal wrath and damnation; signified by "everlasting fire, prepared", in the decrees and purposes of God, "for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41). I proceed to,

II. The decree concerning the rejection of some of the sons of men. It may be observed, that we can hear and read of the non-election and rejection of angels, and of their pre-ordination to condemnation and wrath, with very little emotion of mind: the devils may be cast down to hell, to be everlastingly damned, and be appointed thereunto, and it gives no great concern; no hard thoughts against God arise, no charge of cruelty, want of kindness to his creatures and offspring, and of injustice to them; but if anything of this kind is hinted at, with respect to any of the apostate sons of Adam, presently there is an outcry against it; and all the above things are suggested. What is the reason of this difference? It can be only this, that the latter comes nearer home, and more nearly affects us; it is partiality to ourselves, our nature, and race, to which this is owing; otherwise, far greater severity, if it may be so called, is exercised on fallen angels, than on fallen man; for God has

not spared one of the angels that sinned, provided no saviour for them, nor so much as given them the means of grace; but consigned them all over at once to everlasting wrath and ruin: whereas, not only a Saviour is provided for fallen men, and means of grace allowed them, but thousands, and ten thousands, millions and millions of them are saved, by the abundant mercy and grace of God, through Christ. But to go on,

First, I shall prove that there is a non-election, or rejection of some of the sons of men, when others were chosen; and, indeed, from the election of some, may fairly be inferred, the non-election of others. Common sense tells us, that of persons or things, if some are chosen, others must be left: if there is a remnant of the sons of men, according to the election of grace, then there are others not included in it, which are left unchosen, and are called the rest. "The election", that is, elect men, "hath obtained it", righteousness and eternal life; "and the rest were blinded" (Rom. 11:5, 7). Our Lord says, "I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen", (John 13:18) plainly intimating, that all were not chosen, and it is certain one was not, and whom he calls "the son of perdition"; one, not only deserving of it, but appointed to it; for though chosen to an office, as an apostle, yet not to grace and glory, (John 17:12) and how many such there be, no man can pretend to say; but it is evident there are some, and who are generally described by negative characters; as not known by God and Christ; the elect are God's people, whom he knows; they are elect, according to his foreknowledge; which carries in it love and affection to them; but of others Christ says, "I never knew you"; he knew them by his omniscience, but not with such knowledge as he knows the elect of God; he never knew them as the objects of his Father's love, and his own; he never knew them as the objects of his Father's choice, and his own; he never knew them in the gift of his Father to him, (Matthew 7:23) hence they are represented as "not" loved, which is meant by being hated: "Esau have I hated"; that is, had not loved him, as he had Jacob; for it cannot be understood of positive hatred, for God hates none of his creatures, as such, only as workers of iniquity; but of negative hatred, or of not loving him; which, in comparison of the love he bore to Jacob, might be called hatred: in which sense the word is used in Luke 14:26. Moreover, they are spoken of as "not" being given to Christ; for if there are some that are "given" to him "out of the world", then there must be a world which are not given, and for whom he has not so much concern as even to pray for them, (John 17:6, 9) they are frequently described, as not having their names written, and not to be found written in the Lamb's book of life, (Rev. 13:8, 17:8, 20:15). Now as election is signified by the writing of names in the book of life, non-election is expressed by not writing the names of some there; and if those

whose names are written there, are the elect, then those whose names are not written these, but are left out, must be non-elect: to which may be added, that our Lord says of these persons, "Ye are not of my sheep", and gives this as a reason why they believed not in him (John 10:26). But the goats he will place on his left hand, pass sentence of condemnation on them, and send them into everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:33, 41, 46).

Moreover, from the effects of election not having place in some persons, it may be concluded, that there are such who are non-elect. The effectual calling is a certain fruit and effect of election; "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called", (Rom. 8:30) not only externally, but internally, with an holy and heavenly calling, to grace here, and glory hereafter. But are all called in this manner? No; there are some who have not so much as the outward call by the ministry of the word, have not the external means of grace; but as they sin without law, perish without it (Rom. 10:14, 2:12). Those who are chosen, are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ; they are chosen to holiness, and through sanctification of the Spirit. But are all made like to Christ, and conformed to his image? Do not many bear the image of Satan, imitate him, and do his lusts? Are all men made holy, or have they the sanctification of the Spirit? Whom God predestinates he justifies, by the righteousness of his Son. But are all men justified? No; for though he justifies some of all sorts and nations; as the circumcised Jews by faith, and the uncircumcised Gentiles through faith, yet not every individual; yea, there is a world that will be condemned, and consequently not predestinated to life (1 Cor. 11:32). They that are chosen, are predestinated to the adoption of children, and enjoy both the grace and inheritance of children. But are all children and heirs? Is there not such a distinction among men, as children of God, and children of the devil; between whom there is, and will be, an eternal difference? (1 John 3:10) and therefore there must be an election, and a non-election among them. Moreover, whom God has predestinated, or chosen to life and happiness, these he glorifies, (Rom. 8:30) they obtain the glory of Christ, which his Lather has given him for them, and to which they are chosen and called (John 17:22; 2 Thess. 2:13, 14). But are all glorified? Do not some go into perdition, even into everlasting punishment? And therefore must be considered as non-elect (Rev. 17:8; Matthew 25:46). To all which may be added, that those that are given to Christ, which is but another phrase for being chosen in him; these, he says, shall come to him, and he will in no wise cast them out; yea, that they are his sheep, whom he must bring to his Father, to himself, to his fold, to grace and glory (John 6:37 10:16). But are there not some whom Christ will drive away from him, and to then, say, "Depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire" (Matthew

7:23, 25:41). All this put together most clearly and fully proves, that there are some who are not chosen of God, but rejected by him.

Secondly, The parts of this decree, concerning the rejection of men, are commonly said to be preterition and pre-damnation.

1. Preterition is God's passing by some men, when he chose others: and in this act, or part of the decree, men are considered as in the pure mass of creature-ship, or creability; in which state they are found, when passed by or rejected, and in which they are left, even just as they are found, nothing put into them; but were left in the pure mass, as they lay, and so no injury done them; nor is God to be charged with any injustice towards them: in this act sin comes not into consideration, as it does in a following one; for in this men are considered as not created, and so not fallen; but as unborn, and having done neither good nor evil (Rom. 9:11). And this is a pure act of sovereignty in God, and to his sovereign will it is to be ascribed; who has the same sovereign power, and greater, than the potter has over his clay, to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour (Rom. 9:19, 20, 22). This being expressed, as before observed, by negative phrases, is, by some, called negative reprobation.

2. Pre-damnation is God's appointment, or pre-ordination of men to condemnation for sin; and is what is spoken of in Jude 1:4. "There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation"; and who are described by the following characters, "ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and, or even our Lord Jesus Christ"; which, when observed, is sufficient to clear this decree of God from the charge of cruelty and injustice: and this, by some, is called, positive reprobation. The word אפֻפכ, translated "condemnation", in the above quoted text, some render "judgment", and interpret it of judicial blindness and hardness of heart; which appeared in the persons embracing and spreading false and pernicious doctrines spoken of; and this is, indeed, what they are foreordained, or appointed to, as a punishment of former sins; for this hardness, &c. presupposes former sins, and an obstinate continued course in them; either against the light and law of nature, which they like not to walk according to, and therefore God gives them up, pursuant to his decree, to a reprobate mind, to do things not convenient, (Rom. 1:24, 28) or against divine revelation, precepts, counsels, and admonitions, like Israel of old, hearkening not to the voice of the Lord, in his word, nor paying any regard to his instructions; and therefore he gives them up, as he determined to do, to their own hearts' lusts, and to walk in their own counsels, (Ps. 81:11, 12) and this is the sense of the word in John 9:39. God hardens some mens hearts, as he did Pharaoh's, and he wills to harden them, or he hardens them

according to his decreeing will; "Whom he will he hardeneth", (Rom. 9:18) this he does not by any positive act, by infusing hardness and blindness into the hearts of men; which is contrary to his purity and holiness, and would make him the author of sin; but by leaving men to their natural blindness and hardness of heart; for the understanding is naturally darkened; and there is a natural blindness, hardness, and callousness of heart, through the corruption of nature, and which is increased by habits of sinning; men are in darkness, and choose to walk in it; and therefore God, as he decreed, gives them up to their own wills and desires, and to Satan, the god of the world, they choose to follow, and to be led captive by, who blinds their minds yet more and more, lest light should break in unto them, (Eph. 4:18; Ps. 82:5; 2 Cor. 4:4) and also God may be said to harden and blind, by denying them that grace which can only cure them of their hardness and blindness, and which he, of his free favour, gives to his chosen ones, (Ezek. 36:26, 27) but is not obliged to give it to any; and because he gives it not, he is said to hide, as he determined to hide, the things of his grace from the wise and prudent, even because it so seemed good in his sight, (Matthew 11:25, 26). Hence this blindness, hardness, insensibility, and stupidity, are represented as following upon non-election; not as the immediate effect of it, but as consequences of it; and such as neither judgments nor mercies can remove; and bring persons to a right sense of sin, and repentance for it (Rom. 11:7-10). The sin and fall of Adam having brought him into a state of infidelity, in which God has concluded him: and he does not think fit to give to every man that grace which can only cure him of his unbelief, and without which, and unless almighty power and grace go along with the means they have, they cannot believe; whereby the decrees, predictions, and declarations of God are fulfilled in them, (John 12:37-40) yea, as Christ is said to be set, or appointed, "for the fall of many in Israel", (Luke 2:34) so many are appointed to stumble at the Word, at him, the Stone of stumbling, and Rock of offence, being children of disobedience, and left as such; when, to those who are a chosen generation, he is a precious cornerstone, and they believe in him, and are saved by him, (1 Peter 2:7-9) hence we read of some, who, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, to them are sent by God strong delusions, and they are given up to believe a lie, that they might be damned; not that God infuses any delusion or deceit into them, but because of their disbelief of, and disrespect to him and his Word, he suffers their corruptions to break forth and prevail, not giving restraining grace to them; so that they become a prey to them that lie in wait to deceive; and being easy and credulous, they believe lies spoken in hypocrisy; which issue in their damnation; while others, beloved of the Lord, and chosen from

the beginning to salvation, obtain the glory of Christ (2 Thess. 2:10-14). But though all this is a most certain truth, and is contained in the decree we are speaking of, yet condemnation, or everlasting punishment, seems to be meant in the passage quoted; or, however, this is what some men are foreordained unto.

Some will have it, that this refers to something fore-written, as they choose to render the word; to some prophecy concerning the condemnation of those persons, and particularly to that of Enoch, (Jude 1:14, 15) but it is not certain that prophecy was ever written; besides, a prophecy, or prediction, of anything future, is founded upon an antecedent predetermination and appointment; God foretells by his prophets what will be, because he has determined it shall be; if, therefore, the condemnation of those persons was foretold in any written prophecy, it was because God had decreed it should come upon them, or they be brought into it. It seems to have the same sense with God's appointing men unto wrath; which, though not in so many words expressed, is manifestly implied; as when the apostle says, "God hath not appointed us to wrath", who yet were children of wrath, and deserving of it as others; "but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ": it suggests, that though he had not appointed them, yet he had appointed others to wrath, and who are therefore called "vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction", by their own sins and transgressions (1 Thess. 5:9; Rom. 9:22). With which agrees what is said of some wicked men, who are "reserved" in the purposes and decrees of God, "to the day of destruction"; in consequence of which, "they shall be brought to the day of wrath", which God has appointed for the execution of his wrath; and hence the casting of the fury of his wrath, in all the dreadful instances of it, is called "the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed; unto him of God", (Job 21:30, 20:23-29) and this is the sense of Proverbs 16:4, for the meaning of the text is not, nor is it our sense of it, as some misrepresent it, as if God made man to damn him; we say no such thing, nor does the text; our sentiment is, that God made man neither to damn nor save him; but he made him for his own glory, and he will be glorified in him, in one way or another: nor that he made man wicked, in order to damn him; for God made man upright; men made themselves wicked by their own inventions; which are the cause of damnation: but the true sense of the passage is, that "the Lord hath made", that is, has appointed "all things for himself", for his own glory: and should it be objected, that the wicked could not be for his glory, it is added, "Yea, even the wicked for the day of evil"; that is, he has appointed the wicked for the day of evil, to suffer justly for their sins, to the illustration of the glory of his justice.

Thirdly, The causes of this act.

l. The efficient cause is God; it is the Lord, that makes all things for his own glory, and the wicked for the day of evil; it is God that appoints to wrath, and foreordains to condemnation; what if "God willing to show his wrath", &c (Prov. 16:4; 1 Thess. 5:9; Rom. 9:22). And,

1. It is an act of his sovereignty, who does what he pleases in heaven and in earth; he does according to his will in the armies of the heavens, and among the inhabitants of the earth; as he does all things, so this, according to the counsel of his will; for though it is sovereign, it is not in such sense arbitrary as to be without reason and wisdom; it is a wise counsel of his, for his own glory. The objector, introduced by the apostle, supposes this, that it is an act of his sovereign will; and therefore says, "Why does he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" And which the apostle denies not, but reasons upon it, and confirms it (Rom. 9:19-22).

2. It is agreeable to his justice: the same apostle treating on this subject asks, "Is there unrighteousness with God?" That is, to love one and hate another, to choose one and not another, before they were born, or had done good or evil; and he answers, "God forbid"; since in his act of passing by one, when he chose another, he left him as he found him, without putting, or supposing, any iniquity in him; without any charge of any sin or laying him under a necessity to commit any. In the act of pre-damnation, he considers him as a sinner, and foreordains him to punishment for his sins; and if it is no injustice in God to punish men for sin, it cannot be unjust in him to determine to punish for it: if the judgments of God on antichrist are true and righteous, and display his holiness and justice, it cannot be unrighteous in him to decree to inflict these judgments on him, and his followers, here and hereafter: if it is a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to them that trouble his people, and so to them that commit any other sin, it must be agreeable to his justice to appoint them to indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish; even every soul of man that does evil, if he pleases.

3. Nor is this act contrary to his goodness; all persons and things are his own, and he may do with them as he pleases, without an impeachment of this or any other perfection of his; "Is thine eye evil", says he, "because I am good?" (Matthew 20:15). What distinguishing grace and goodness has been exercised towards fallen man, when no degree of sparing mercy was shown to fallen angels! And what goodness has been laid up, and wrought out, for many of the sons of Adam, though others have been rejected! And even on them that are rejected, what riches of providential goodness have been, and are bestowed on them, in the most plentiful and liberal manner! With what lenity, patience, forbearance, and "long-suffering", has God "endured the vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction", fitted by themselves! (Rom. 2:4

9:22). This act of God is neither contrary to the mercy, nor to the wisdom of God, nor to the truth and sincerity of God, in his promises, declarations, calls, &c. Nor to the holiness and justice of God; as I have elsewhere made abundantly to appear.

4. The moving, or impulsive cause of God's making such a decree, by which he has rejected some of the race of Adam from his favour, is not sin, but the good pleasure of his will: sin is the meritorious cause of eternal death, wrath, and damnation; wrath is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, and comes upon the children of disobedience, whom God leaves in it; the wages, or demerit of sin, is death, even death eternal: but then it is not the impulsive cause of the decree itself; not of preterition, because that, as election, was before good or evil were done, and irrespective of either; nor of pre-damnation, God, indeed, damns no man but for sin; nor did he decree to damn any but for sin; but yet, though sin is the cause of damnation and death, the thing decreed, it is not the cause of the decree itself: it is the cause of the thing willed, but not the moving cause of God's will; for nothing out of God can move his will; if it could, the will of God would be dependent on the will and actions of men; whereas, his purpose, whether with respect to election or rejection, stands not on the works and will of men, but on his own will and pleasure: besides, if sin was the cause of the decree itself, or of God's will to reject men, then all would be rejected, since all fell in Adam; all are under sin, all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; all are, by nature, children of wrath, and deserving of it: what then could move God to choose one and reject another, but his sovereign goodwill and pleasure? That then is the sole moving and impulsive cause of such a decree; when we have searched the scriptures most thoroughly, and employed our reasoning powers to the highest pitch, and racked our invention to the uttermost; no other cause of God's procedure in this affair can be assigned, but what Christ has expressed; "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight"; as to hide the things of his grace and gospel from some, and reveal them to others; so to decree and determine within himself, to act in this manner, (Matthew 11:25, 26).

4. The final cause, or end of this decree, is his own glory; this is the ultimate end of all his decrees and appointments, and so of this, appointing the wicked for the day of evil; it was for this purpose he raised up Pharaoh, and decreed all he did concerning him, that he might show his power in him, his sovereignty and dominion over him, and that his name and glory might be declared throughout all the earth: and the same view he has with respect to all the vessels of wrath, namely, to show his wrath, and to make his power known, in their destruction, which is of themselves; it is not the death and

damnation of the sinner, in which he delights not, that is his ultimate end; it is his own glory, the glory of his perfections, and particularly the glory of his justice and holiness (Prov.. 16:4; Rom. 9:17, 22). 2d. Fourthly, The date of this decree is as ancient as eternity itself; wicked men are "before of old", said to be "ordained to condemnation" (Jude 1:4). Some who would have the word rendered, "before written", as already observed, suppose the text refers to a written prophecy, concerning the condemnation of those men, and that regard is had to a parallel place in 2 Peter 2:1-3. So Grotius. But if Jude had that in his view, he would never have said that they were "of old", a long time ago, before written, and prophesied of; since, according to the common calculation, that epistle of Peter was written in the same year that this of Jude's was: the date of election and rejection must be the same; Esau was hated, as early as Jacob was loved, or rejected when he was chosen; and both were done before they were born. If men were chosen from the beginning, that is, from eternity to salvation; then those that were not chosen, or not ordained to eternal life, were foreordained as early to condemnation; and so is the Syriac version of the text in Jude, "were from the beginning ordained"; the same date that is given of election in 2 Thessalonians 2:13. And, indeed, there can be no new decree, appointment, or purpose, made by God in time; if the decree of election was from eternity, that of rejection must be so too; since there cannot be one without the other; if some were chosen before the foundation of the world, others must be left, or passed by, as early; and, indeed, those whose names are left out of the book of life, are expressly said to be "not written in the book of life, from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 17:8). And from the whole,

Fifthly, The properties of this decree will appear to be much the same with those of the decree of election, and need be but just mentioned: as,

I. That it is an eternal decree of God. This did not arise in the mind of God in time, as no new act does, but was made before the foundation of the world.

2. That it is free and sovereign, owing to his own will and pleasure, not moved to it by anything out of himself; "He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth", (Rom. 9:18) and so he determined to do.

3. It is immutable and irrevocable; is it expressed by a decree, a pre-ordination? All the decrees of God are unalterable, there is an immutability in his counsel, let it be concerning what it may. Is it expressed by a writing or a fore-writing, as in Jude 1:4? It is such a writing as ever remains in full force. Did Pilate say, "what I have written, I have written", signifying it should remain without any alteration? (John 19:22). Then it may be concluded, that

what God has written shall remain, and never be revoked; for he is in one mind, and none can turn him.

4. It is of particular persons; it does not merely respect events, characters, and actions; but the persons of men; as they are persons who are chosen in Christ, and appointed, not to wrath, but to obtain salvation by him; so they are persons who are foreordained to condemnation, whose names are left out of the book of life, while others are written in it.

5. It is a most just and righteous decree; and no other but such can be made by God, who is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

Chapter 4

OF THE ETERNAL UNION OF THE ELECT OF GOD UNTO HIM.

The union of God's elect unto him, their adoption by him, justification before him, and acceptance with him, being eternal, internal, and immanent acts in God; I know not where better to place them, and take them into consideration, than next to the decrees of God, and particularly the decree of election; since as that flows from the love of God, and is in Christ from everlasting, there must of course be an union to him so early; and since predestination to the adoption of children, and acceptance in the beloved, are parts and branches of it, (Eph. 1:4-6) they must be of the same date. I shall begin with the union of God's elect in Christ. I shall not here treat of any time acts of union; as of our nature to the Son of God by his incarnation, when he became our brother, our near kinsman, flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone; and we and he were of one, that is, of one nature, (Heb. 2:11, 14, 16) nor of the vital union of our persons to him in regeneration, when we are quickened by the power and grace of God, Christ is formed in our hearts, and we become new creatures in him, and are in him as living fruitful branches in him, the living vine; which is our open being in Christ, in consequence of a secret being in him from everlasting by electing grace (see Rom. 16:7; 2 Cor. 5:17, 12:2). Nor of the more open and manifest union of the saints to God hereafter; who being once in Christ, are always found in him; die in union to him, rise from the dead by virtue of that union; and who will then, in soul and body, be one in God, Father, Son, and Spirit; as the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father; whose union to one another is the pattern and exemplar of theirs; and for the open manifestation of which Christ prays (John 17:21, 23). But I shall consider the union of the elect to God, as it is in its original, and as an eternal immanent act in God; and which is no other than the going forth of his heart in love to them, and

thereby uniting them to himself; which love, as it is from everlasting, (Jer. 31:3; John 17:23, 24) so it is of a cementing and uniting nature; and, indeed, is the bond of union between God and his chosen people, or that by which he has taken them into near union with himself: love is the bond of union among men, of friendship one to another; it was this which knit the soul of Jonathan to the soul of David, so that he loved him as his own soul; it is the bond of the saints union to each other; their hearts are "knit together in love": hence "charity", or love, is called, "the bond of perfectness", or the perfect bond, which joins and keeps them together (Col. 2:7 3:14). It was love which so closely cemented the hearts of the first Christians to one another, insomuch that the multitude of them were "of one heart and of one soul" (Acts 4:32). And now love must operate infinitely more strongly in the heart of God, attracting and uniting the objects of it to himself, giving them such a nearness and union to him which cannot be dissolved; nothing can "separate from the love of God"; not the fall of God's elect in Adam; nor their actual sins and transgressions in a state of unregeneracy; nor their revoltings and backslidings after conversion, (Rom. 8:38, 39; Eph. 2:3, 4; Hosea 14:4). This bond of union is indissoluble by the joint power of men and devils. In virtue of this, the people of God become a part of himself, a near, dear, and tender part, even as the apple of his eye; have a place in his heart, are engraven on the palms of his hands, and ever on his thoughts; the desires and affections of his soul are always towards them, and he is ever devising and forming schemes for their welfare; how great is his goodness which he has laid up and wrought for them! (Zech. 2:8; Ps. 139:17; Song 7:10; Isa. 59:16; Ps. 31:19). The love of Christ to the elect, is as early as that of his Father's love to him and them, and which, it seems, was a love of complacency and delight; for before the world was his "delights were with the sons of men", (John 15:9; Prov. 8:30, 31) and this is of the same cementing and uniting nature as his Father's; it is this which causes him to stick closer than a brother to his people; and nothing can separate from his love to them, any more than from the love of the Father; having loved his own, he loves them to the end. This bond of union remains firm and sure, and gives such a nearness to him the church wished for; "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm" (Song 8:6; Prov. 18:24; Rom. 8:35). The same may be said of the love of the Spirit; for it is the everlasting love of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, which is the bond of the union of God's elect to the sacred three; they have all three loved the elect with an everlasting love; and thereby have firmly and everlastingly united them to themselves; and hence because of the Spirit's love of them, and union to them, he, in time, becomes the Spirit of life and grace in them (Rom. 15:30). Now of this love union there are several

branches, or which are so many illustrations and confirmations of it, and all in eternity; as, 1. An election union in Christ: this flows from the love of God, "electio praesupponit dilectionem", election presupposes love; (see 2 Thess. 2:13) particular persons are said to be chosen in Christ, as Rufus, (Rom. 16:13) and the apostle says of himself and others, that God had chosen them "in Christ", and that before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4). Election gives a being in Christ, a kind of subsistence in him; though not an "esse actu", an actual being, yet at least an "esse representativum", a representative being; even such an one as that they are capable of having grants of grace made to them in Christ, and of being blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, and that before the world began, (2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:3, 4) and how they can be said to have a being in Christ, and yet have no union to him, I cannot conceive. Besides, in election there is a near relation commences between Christ and the elect; he is given to be an head to them, and they are given as members to him; and as such they are chosen together, he first in order of nature, as the head; and then they as members of him; nothing is more common with sound divines than to express themselves in this manner, when speaking of the election of Christ, and his people in him; particularly, says Dr. Goodwin, "an the womb, head and members are not conceived apart, but together, as having relation to each other; so were we and Christ (as making up one mystical body to God) formed together in the eternal womb of election." And in the same place he says, "Jesus Christ was the head of election, and of the elect of God; and so in order of nature elected first, though in order of time we were elected together; in the womb of election he, the head, came out first, and then we, the members." Now what relation can well be thought of nearer, or more expressive of a close union, than this of head and members? Christ is the chosen head of the church, the church the chosen body of Christ, the fulness of him that fills all in all, (Eph. 1:22, 23) hence is the safety and security of the saints, being in Christ through electing grace, and united to him; and therefore said to be "preserved in" him; herein and hereby put into his hand, made the sheep of his hand, out of whose hands none can pluck them, nor they ever fall (Jude 1:1). 2. There is a conjugal union between Christ and the elect, which also flows from love, and commenced in eternity. By the institution of natural marriage, the persons between whom it is contracted become one flesh, as did Adam and Eve: and a nearer union than this cannot well be conceived of; whose marriage was a shadow and representation of that between Christ and his church; whom, having espoused, he nourishes and cherishes as his own flesh; and they become one, and have one and the same name, Christ, that is, Christ mystical, (Eph. 5:29-32; 1 Cor. 12:12). Now though the open marriage

relation between Christ and particular persons takes place at conversion, which is the day of their espousals to him, (Jer. 2:2) and the more public notification of it will be when all the elect of God are gathered in, and shall in one body be as a bride adorned for her husband, and the marriage of the Lamb shall be come; and this declared in the most open manner, and the nuptials solemnized most magnificently (Rev. 21:2). Yet the secret act of betrothing was in eternity, when Christ, being in love with the chosen ones, asked them of his Father to be his spouse and bride; and being given to him, he betrothed them to himself in lovingkindness, and from thenceforward looked on them as standing in such a relation to him; and which is the foundation of all other after acts of grace unto them: hence, because of his marriage relation to his church, he became her surety, and gave himself for her, shed his precious blood to sanctify and cleanse her from all the impurities of the fall, and other transgressions; that he might present her to himself a glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; even just such a church, and in such glory he had viewed her in, when he first betrothed her, (Eph. 5:25-27). Song with the Jews there was a private betrothing before open marriage, and the consummation of it; at which betrothing the relation of husband and wife commenced, (Deut. 22:23, 24) and so Christ is said to be the husband of the Gentile church before she was in actual being (Isa. 54:5). 3. There is a federal union between Christ and the elect, and they have a covenant subsistence in him as their head and representative. The covenant flows from, and is the effect of the love, grace, and mercy of God; these are spoken of along with it as the foundation of it, (Ps. 89:2, 3, 33, 34; Isa. 54:10) hence it is commonly called the covenant of grace, and this was made from everlasting; Christ was set up as the mediator of it, and his goings forth in it were so early, (Prov. 8:23; Mic. 5:2) eternal life was promised before the world began, and blessings of grace so soon provided, (Titus 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:9) all which proves the antiquity of this covenant, of which more hereafter. Now this covenant was made with Christ not as a single person, but as a common head; not for himself, or on his own account only, but for and on the account of his people; as the covenant of works was made with Adam, as the federal head of all his posterity; hence he is said to be the figure or type of him that was to come, (Rom. 5:14) so the covenant of grace was made with Christ as the federal head of his spiritual offspring; and for this reason a parallel is ran between them in (Rom. 5:1-21; 1 Cor. 15:1-58) as if they had been the only two men in the world, the one called the first, the other the second man. Christ represented his people in this covenant, and they had a representative union to him in it; all that he promised and engaged to do, he promised and engaged in their name and on their account; and when

performed it was the same with God, as if it had been done by them; and what he received, promises and blessings of grace, he received in their name, and they received them in him, being one with him as their common head and representative. 4. There is a legal union between Christ and the elect, the bond of which is his suretiship for them, flowing from his strong love and affection to them. In this respect Christ and they are one in the eye of the law, as the bondsman and debtor are one in a legal sense; so that if one of them pays the debt bound for, it is the same as if the other did. Christ is the surety of the better testament; he drew nigh to God, gave his bond, laid himself under obligation to pay the debts of his people, and satisfy for their sins; who being as such accepted of by God, he and they were considered as one; and this is the ground and foundation of his payment of their debts, of his making satisfaction for their sins, of the imputation of their sins to him, and of the imputation of his righteousness to them. In short, it is the saint's antecedent union and relation to Christ in eternity, in the several views of it in which it has been considered, which is the ground and reason of all that Christ has done and suffered for them, and not for others; and of all the blessings of grace that are or shall be bestowed upon them, and which are denied to others: the reason why he became incarnate for them, and took upon him human nature with a peculiar regard to them, was because they were children given to him; and why he laid down his life for them, because they were his sheep; and why he gave himself for them, because they were his church; and why he saved them from their sins, because they were his people, (Heb. 2:13, 14; John 10:14, 15; Eph. 5:25; Matthew 1:21). In a word, union to Christ is the first thing, the first blessing of grace flowing from love and effected by it; and hence is the application of all others; "of him are ye in Christ Jesus", first loved and united to Christ, and then it follows, "who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification, and redemption", (1 Cor. 1:30). Song Dr. Goodwin observes, that union with Christ is the first fundamental thing of justification and sanctification and all. Christ first takes us, and then sends his Spirit; he apprehends us first; it is not my being regenerate that puts me into a right of all these privileges; but it is Christ takes me, and then gives me his Spirit, faith, holiness,

Chapter 5

OF OTHER ETERNAL AND IMMANENT ACTS IN GOD, PARTICULARLY ADOPTION AND JUSTIFICATION.

I shall not here treat of these as doctrines, in the full extent of them; or as blessings of grace actually bestowed upon, and enjoyed by believers, with all the privileges and advantages arising from thence; or as transient acts

passing on them, and terminating in their consciences at believing; but as internal and immanent acts, taken up in the mind of God from eternity, and which abide in his will; in which they have their complete "esse", or being, as eternal election has, being of the same kind and nature, and are ranked with it as of the same date, and as branches of it (Eph. 1:4-6). In the other view of them they will be considered hereafter in course, in a proper place. I shall begin with,

1. Adoption; as predestination to it stands next to election, (Eph. 1:5) which is no other than his will to adopt the chosen ones, which is his adoption of them; for as the will of God to elect any is his election of them, so his will to adopt the same is his adoption of them; and the complete essence of it lies in his will, and is as such an eternal immanent act of it; in like manner as election is, and may be considered as a branch of it, at least of the same nature with it; and which agrees with the sense of the word "adopto", from whence adoption comes, which is compounded of "ad" to, and "opto" to choose; so that adoption is God's choice or election of some to be his children; and by this option, or choice, of his they become so. The Greek word for adoption throughout the New Testament is uioGscna, which signifies "putting among the children"; the phrase used by God (Jer. 3:19). "How shall I put them among the children?" Or a putting one for and in the room of a son, that is a stranger and not a son by birth; a constituting and accounting such an one as a son, according to choice, will, and pleasure: and divine adoption is an act of the sovereign grace and good will of God, (Eph. 1:5) to which he is not induced by any motive out of himself; not by any excellency in the creature; nor for want of a son; one or other of which is the case in human adoptions; as of Moses, a goodly child, by Pharaoh's daughter; and of Esther, a beautiful person, and a relation by Mordecai; but divine adoption is of persons exceeding unworthy and undeserving, nothing engaging in them; not only strangers, but children of wrath even as others, and like the wretched infant in (Ezek. 16:1-63). It is an act of distinguishing grace; it is of men, and not angels; who are servants and not sons, at least not by adoption; and of some men and not of all, though all are alike in their nature state; and it is a most amazing act of unmerited love and free grace (1 John 3:1). Now this is an eternal act of grace:

First, It did not begin in time, but commenced from eternity; it is an act of God's will, and has its complete essence in it; and the will of God is eternal, no new will, nor any new act of will, arises in God in time; or otherwise he would not be the unchangeable God he is.

1. It is an act that does not first take place at believing; indeed the saints are "all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus", openly and

manifestatively, (Gal. 3:26) but then it is not faith that makes them children, but what makes them appear to be so; adoption is the act of God, and not of faith; it is God that says, "How shall I put them among the children?" And again, "I will be their Father, and they shall be my sons and daughters", (Jer. 3:19; 2 Cor. 6:18) it is the work and business of faith to receive the blessing of adoption, which it could not do, unless it had been previously provided in the mind and by the will of God, and in the covenant of his grace; for the reception of which Christ has made way by his redemption, one end of which is "that we might receive the adoption of sons", (Gal. 4:5) that is, by faith; for God has appointed faith to be the general receiver of Christ, and of all the blessings of grace through him, and this among the rest; and to as many as receive Christ, he gives (σ⊥ουαιαϖ), a power, authority, dignity, and privilege to become the sons of God openly; that is, to claim this as their privilege and dignity; which claim is made by faith; but not the thing itself claimed; "even to them that believe on his name", and who are described as regenerate persons; which is an evidence of their sonship, though not the thing itself; "who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God" (John 1:12, 13). But though this describes such who are the sons of God openly, and who believe; yet,

2. Adoption does not first commence at regeneration; adoption and regeneration are two distinct blessings, and the one is previous to the other; though they are commonly confounded together by divines. Regeneration is not the foundation of adoption, but adoption the foundation of regeneration; or, the reason why men are adopted, is not because they are regenerated, but they are regenerated because they are adopted. By adoption they are put into the relation of children, and by regeneration they have a nature given them suitable to that relation; and are made partakers of the divine nature, that they may be made known to be heirs apparent to, and to have a meekness for the possession, enjoyment, and use of it, the inheritance in heaven they are adopted to; for,

3. The act of adoption is previous to any work of the Spirit of God upon the hearts of his people; "Because ye are sons, sons already, sons by adopting grace; God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts", both to convince, convert, regenerate, and effectually call by his grace, and sanctify, and also to comfort, and to enable to cry Abba Father, witnessing to their spirits, that they are the children of God; and hence he is called, "the Spirit of Adoption"; and it is his influences, teachings, and leadings, which are the evidences of adoption; "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God"; not that those influences, operations, and leadings, make them, but make them evident to be such, (Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:14-16).

4. Divine adoption, or sonship, took place before any work of Christ was wrought in time, for any of the sons of men; it was before his incarnation and birth; forasmuch then, or because "the children are partakers of flesh and blood", the children of God, who are so by adopting grace; therefore "he also", Christ, "himself took part of the same"; for though the nature he assumed was what was in common to all mankind, yet he assumed it with a peculiar view to the children of God, the spiritual seed of Abraham; whose nature he is said to take, and for whose sake he was the child born, and the Son given, (Isa. 9:6; Heb. 2:14, 16) and in consequence they must be the children of God before Christ suffered and died; and, indeed, he suffered and died for them under this character, considered as the children of God by adopting grace; for he died not only for the elect of God among the "Jews, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad"; that is, those who were already the children of God by adopting grace, who were scattered throughout the whole Gentile world. This relates to the gathering of all the elect in one, in Christ, in the dispensation of the fulness of times; when Christ suffered as their Surety, Head, and Representative; and when they were all considered as the children of God, whether in heaven or on earth, and whether among Jews or Gentiles, (Eph. 1:10; John 11:51, 52) and in order to bring these many sons to glory, it became him to be made perfect through sufferings, and that through his redemption of them thereby, they might receive, actually in their own persons, the adoption before provided for them, as before observed; see (Heb. 2:10; Gal. 4:5).

Secondly, Adoption is an act of God's free grace from all eternity.

1. The elect of God are frequently spoken of as a distinct number of men, given to Christ, and as previous to their coming to him by faith, which is the certain fruit and consequence of that gift; see (John 17:2, 6, 9, 24, 6:37) yea, they were given to Christ before the world was; for if grace was given to them in him before the world began, they themselves must be given to him, and be in him before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9). Now these were given to Christ in the relation of children, and therefore must be children so early; "Behold, I, and the children which God hath given me" (Heb. 2:13).

2. The elect of God were espoused to Christ in eternity; as has been shown in the preceding chapter; which serves to illustrate and prove the relation of sonship to God so early; for as in natural and civil marriage, if a man marries a king's daughter, he becomes his son in law; as David to Saul: or if a woman marries a king's son, she becomes the king's daughter: so the elect of God, his church and people, being espoused to the Son of God, they become the sons and daughters of the Lord God almighty, the King of kings; and hence the church is called the King's daughter, (Ps. 45:13) and these

persons being betrothed to Christ, the Son of God, in eternity, as they were the spouse of Christ, they must be, and must be considered as being the sons of God so early.

3. The elect of God were taken by him into the covenant of his grace, as children; the sum and substance of which runs thus, "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord almighty" (2 Cor. 6:18). Now this covenant was from everlasting; as the setting up of Christ the Mediator of it so soon; and the promises and blessings, made and provided before the world began, do abundantly testify. Besides, in this covenant, these same persons so early were given to Christ, as his seed and offspring, his children, and he commenced the everlasting Father of them (see Isa. 9:6 53:10).

4. Predestination to the adoption of children, is mentioned along with election, as of the same date with it, and as an illustration of it, and as an addition to it, or rather, a branch of it; as men by election are not only chosen to holiness, but to adoption, and the inheritance annexed to it (Eph. 1:4, 5). Adoption is a sentence of grace conceived in the divine mind, and settled by the divine will, and pronounced in divine predestination, which is an eternal act of God; and so says Dr. Ames, "Adoption is a gracious sentence of God - which sentence is pronounced in the same variety of degrees as justification; for it was first pronounced in divine predestination, (Eph. 1:5) afterwards in Christ, (Gal. 4:5) then in believers themselves" (Gal. 4:6). And all these pronunciations, and so all that Christ did in redemption respecting this, or the Spirit of God does in revealing, applying, and witnessing it, yea, all that will be done in eternity to come; for though now the saints "are the sons of God, it doth not yet appear", clearly and fully, "what they shall be", even as sons, or what dignity and glory they shall be raised unto, in consequence of this relation; I say, all these in time, and to eternity, serve only to open and expand the original act of God's will, in appointing and constituting them his sons in an eternity past.

II. Justification is an act of God's grace, flowing from his sovereign good will and pleasure; the elect of God are said to be "justified by his grace"; and as if that expression was not strong enough to set forth the freeness of it, the word "freely" is added elsewhere; "Being justified freely by his grace" (Titus 3:7; Rom. 3:24). Justification is by many divines distinguished into active and passive. Active justification is the act of God; it is God that justifies. Passive justification is the act of God, terminating on the conscience of a believer, commonly called a transient act, passing upon an external object. It is not of this I shall now treat, but of the former; which is an act internal and eternal, taken up in the divine mind from eternity, and is an immanent, abiding one

in it is, as Dr. Ames expresses it, "a sentence conceived in the divine mind, by the decree of justifying." Now, as before observed, as God's will to elect, is the election of his people, so his will to justify them, is the justification of them; as it is an immanent act in God, it is an act of his grace towards them, is wholly without them, entirely resides in the divine mind, and lies in his estimating, accounting, and constituting them righteous, through the righteousness of his Son; and, as such, did not first commence in time, but from eternity.

First, It does not begin to take place in time, or at believing, but is antecedent to any act of faith.

I. Faith is not the cause, but an effect of justification; it is not the cause of it in any sense; it is not the moving cause, that is the free grace of God; "Being justified freely by his grace", (Rom. 3:24) nor the efficient cause of it; "It is God that justifies", (Rom. 8:33) nor the meritorious cause, as some express it; or the matter of it, that is the obedience and blood of Christ, (Rom. 5:9, 19) or the righteousness of Christ, consisting of his active and passive obedience; nor even the instrumental cause; for, as Mr. Baxter himself argues, "If faith is the instrument of our justification, it is the instrument either of God or man; not of man, for justification is God's act; he is the sole Justifier, (Rom. 3:26) man doth not justify himself: nor of God, for it is not God that believes": nor is it a "causa sine qua non", as the case of elect infants shows; it is not in any class of causes whatever; but it is the effect of justification: all men have not faith, and the reason why some do not believe is, because they are none of Christ's sheep; they were not chosen in him, nor justified through him; but justly left in their sins, and so to condemnation; the reason why others believe is, because they are ordained to eternal life, have a justifying righteousness provided for them, and are justified by it, and shall never enter into condemnation: the reason why any are justified, is not because they have faith; but the reason why they have faith, is because they are justified; was there no such blessing of grace as justification of life in Christ, for the sons of men, there would be no such thing as faith in Christ bestowed on them; precious faith is obtained through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, (2 Peter 1:1) nor, indeed, would there be any room for it, nor any use of it, if a justifying righteousness was not previously provided. Agreeable to this are the reasonings and assertions of Twisse, Maccovius, and others. Now if faith is not the cause, but the effect of justification; then as every cause is before its effect, and every effect follows its cause, justification must be before faith, and faith must follow justification.

2. ***Faith*** is the evidence and manifestation of justification, and therefore justification must be before it; "Faith is the evidence of things not seen",

(Heb. 11:1) but it is not the evidence of that which as yet is not; what it is an evidence of, must be, and it must exist before it. The "righteousness of God", of the God-man and mediator Jesus Christ, "is revealed from faith to faith", in the everlasting gospel, (Rom. 1:17) and therefore must be before it is revealed, and before faith, to which it is revealed: faith is that grace whereby a soul, having seen its guilt, and its want of righteousness, beholds, in the light of the divine Spirit, a complete righteousness in Christ, renounces its own, lays hold off that, puts it on as a garment, rejoices in it, and glories of it; the Spirit of God witnessing to his spirit, that he is a justified person; and so he is evidently and declaratively "justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11).

3. Faith adds nothing to the "esse" only to the "bene esse" of justification; it is no part of, nor any ingredient in it; it is a complete act in the eternal mind of God, without the being or consideration of faith, or any foresight of it; a man is as much justified before as after it, in the account of God; and after he does believe, his justification does not depend on his acts of faith; for though "we believe not, yet he abides faithful"; that is, God is faithful to his covenant engagements with his Son, as their Surety, by whose surety-ship righteousness they are justified; but by faith men have a comfortable sense, perception and apprehension of their justification, and enjoy that peace of soul which results from it; it is by that only, under the testimony of the divine Spirit, that they know their interest in it, and can claim it, and so have the comfort of it. But,

4. Justification is the object, and faith the act that is conversant with it. Now every object is prior to the act that is concerned with it; unless when an act gives being to the object, which is not the case here; for faith, as has been seen, is not the cause, nor matter of justification; what the eye is to the body, that is faith to the soul: the eye, by virtue of its visive faculty, beholds sensible objects, but does not produce them; they are before they are seen, and did they not previously exist, the eye could not behold them; the sun is before it is seen; and so in innumerable other instances: faith is to the soul, as the hand is to the body, receives things for its use; but then these things must be before they are received; faith receives the blessing of justification from the Lord, even that righteousness by which it is justified, from the God of its salvation; but then this blessing must exist before faith can receive it (Ps. 24:5). Christ's righteousness, by which men are justified, is compared to a robe or garment, which faith puts on; but then as a garment must be wrought and completely made, before it is put on, so must the justifying righteousness of Christ be, before it can be put on by faith.

5. All the elect of God were justified in Christ, their Head and

Representative, when he rose from the dead, and therefore they believe: Christ engaged as a Surety for all his people from eternity, had their sins imputed to him, and for which he made himself responsible; in the fulness of time he made satisfaction for them by his sufferings and death, and at his resurrection was acquitted and discharged: now as he suffered and died, not as a private, but as a public person, so he rose again, and was justified as such, even as the representative of his people; hence when he rose, they rose with him; and when he was justified, they were justified in him; for he was "delivered for their offences, and was raised again for their justification", (Rom. 4:25; 1 Tim. 3:16) and this is the sense and judgment of many sound and learned divines; as, besides our Sandfords and Dr. Goodwins, the learned Amesius, Hoornbeck, Witsius, and others. But,

Secondly, Justification is not only before faith, but it is from eternity, being an immanent act in the divine mind, and so an internal and eternal one; as may be concluded,

1. From eternal election: the objects of justification are God's elect; "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies"; that is, the elect. Now if God's elect, as such, can have nothing laid to their charge; but are by God acquitted, discharged, and justified; and if they bore this character of elect from eternity, or were chosen in Christ before the world began; then they must be acquitted, discharged and justified so early, so as nothing could be laid to their charge: besides, by electing grace men were put into Christ, and were considered as in him before the foundation of the world; and if they were considered as in him, they must be considered as righteous or unrighteous; not surely as unrighteous, unjustified, and in a state of condemnation; for "there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ", (Rom. 8:1) and therefore must be considered as righteous, and so justified: "Justified then we were, says Dr. Goodwin when first elected, though not in our own persons, yet in our Head, as he had our persons then given him, and we came to have a being and an interest in him."

2. Justification may well be considered as a branch of election; it is no other, as one expresses it, than setting apart the elect alone to be partakers of Christ's righteousness; and a setting apart Christ's righteousness for the elect only; it is mentioned along with election, as of the same date with it; "Wherein", that is, in the grace of God, particularly the electing grace of God, spoken of before, "he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1:6). What is this acceptance in Christ, but justification in him? And this is expressed as a past act, in the same language as other eternal things be in the context, he "hath" blessed us, and he "hath" chosen us, and "having" predestinated us, so he hath made us accepted; and, indeed, as Christ as

always the beloved of God, and well pleasing to him; so all given to him, and in him, were beloved of God, well pleasing to him, and accepted with him, or justified in him from eternity.

3. Justification is one of those spiritual blessings wherewith the elect are blessed in Christ according to election-grace, before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:3, 4). That justification is a spiritual blessing none will deny; and if the elect were blessed with all spiritual blessings, then with this; and if thus blessed according to election, or when elected, then before the foundation of the world: and this grace of justification must be no small part of that "grace which was given in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world was" (2 Tim. 1:9). We may say, says Dr. Goodwin, of all spiritual blessings in Christ, what is said of Christ, that his goings forth are from everlasting - in Christ we were blessed with all spiritual blessings, (Eph. 1:3) as we are blessed with all other, so with this also, that we were justified then in Christ!

4. Christ became a Surety for his people from everlasting; engaged to pay their debts, bear their sins, and make satisfaction for them; and was accepted of as such by God his Father, who thenceforward looked at him for payment and satisfaction, and looked at them as discharged, and so they were in his eternal mind; and it is a rule that will hold good, as Maccovius observes, "that as soon as one becomes a surety for another, the other is immediately freed, if the surety be accepted;" which is the case here and it is but a piece of common prudence, when a man has a bad debt, and has good security for it, to look not to the principal debtor, who will never be able to pay him, but to his good bondsman and surety, who is able; and so Dr. Goodwin observes, that God, in the everlasting transaction with Christ, "told him, as it were, that he would look for his debt and satisfaction of him, and that he did let the sinners go free; and so they are in this respect, justified from all eternity."

5. The everlasting transaction, the same excellent writer thinks, is imported in 2 Corinthians 5:19. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them". And the very learned Witsius is of opinion, "that this act of God may be called, the general justification of the elect." And, indeed, since it was the determination of God, and the scheme and method he proposed to take in Christ for the reconciliation of the elect, not to impute their sins to them, but to his Son, their Surety; then seeing they are not imputed to them, but to him; and if reckoned and accounted to him, then not to them; and if charged to him, then they must be discharged from them, and so justified; and a non- imputation of sin to the elect, is no other than a justification of them; and thus the apostle strongly concludes the imputation of Christ's righteousness; which is the "formalis ratio", or the

form of justification, from the non-imputation of sin, and the remission of it (Rom. 4:6-8).

6. It was the will of God from everlasting, not to punish sin in the persons of his elect, but to punish it in the person of Christ; and that it was his will not to punish it in his people, but in his Son, is manifest from his setting him forth in his purposes and decrees, to be the propitiation for sin; and from his sending him forth in the likeness of sinful flesh, to condemn sin in the flesh; and from his being made sin and a curse, that his people might be made the righteousness of God in him. Now, as has been often observed, no new will can arise in God; God wills nothing in time, but what he willed from eternity; and if it was the eternal will of God not to punish sin in his people, but in his Son, then they were eternally discharged, acquitted from sin, and secured from everlasting wrath and destruction; and if they were eternally discharged from sin, and freed from punishment, they were eternally justified: Dr. Twisse makes the very quiddity and essence of justification and remission of sin, which he takes to be the same, to lie in the will of God not to punish; and asserts, that this will not to punish, as it is an immanent act, was from eternity.

7. It deserves regard and attention, that the saints under the Old Testament, were justified by the same righteousness of Christ, as those under the New, and that before the sacrifice was offered up, the satisfaction given, and the everlasting righteousness brought in; for Christ's blood was shed for the remission of sins that were past, and his death was for the redemption of transgressions under the first Testament (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:15). Now if God could, and actually did, justify some, three or four thousand years before the righteousness of Christ was actually wrought out, taking his Son's word and bond as their Surety, and in a view of his future righteousness; why could he not, and why may it not be thought he did, justify all his elect from eternity, upon the word and bond of their Surety, and on the basis of his future righteousness, which he had engaged to work out, and which he full well knew he would most certainly work out? And if there is no difficulty in conceiving of the one, there can be none in conceiving of the other.

There are many objections made to this truth; some are so trifling as to deserve no notice; a few of the more principal ones I shall briefly answer to, and chiefly those made, for the most part, by the learned Turretine.

1. It is objected, that men cannot be justified before they exist; they must be, before they can be justified; since "non entis nulla sunt accidentia", &c. Of a nonentity nothing can be said, nor anything ascribed to it. To which I answer, whatever is in this objection, lies as strongly against eternal election, as against eternal justification; for it may as well be said, how can a man

be elected before he exists? he must be before he can be chosen, or be the object of choice. I own, with Maccovius, that this is true of non-entities, that have neither an "esse actu", nor an "esse cognitum", that have neither an actual being, nor is it certain, nor known that they shall have any future being: but though God's elect have not an actual being from eternity, yet it is certain, by the prescience and predetermination of God, that they shall have one; for "known unto God are all his works from the beginning", or from eternity (Acts 15:18). And besides this, they have an "esse representativum", a representative being in Christ; which is more than other creatures have, whose future existences are certain; even such a being as makes them capable of being chosen in Christ, and blessed in him before the foundation of the world, and of having grace given them in him before the world was; and why not then of being justified in him? (Eph. 1:3, 4; 2 Tim. 1:9). Moreover, as the same writer observes, "Justification is a moral act, which does not require the existence of the subject together with it; but it is enough that it shall exist some time or other."

2. It is further objected, that if God's elect are justified from eternity, then they were not only justified before they themselves existed, but before any sin was committed by them; and it seems absurd that men should be justified from sins before they were committed, or any charge of them brought against them. To which may be replied, that it is no more absurd to say, that God's elect were justified from their sins before they were committed, than it is to say, that they were imputed to Christ, and he died for them, and made satisfaction for them before committed; which is most certainly true of all those that live, since the coming and death of Christ: such that believe the doctrines of the imputation of sin to Christ, and of his satisfaction for it, ought never to make this objection; and if they do, they, ought to be fully content with the answer. As for the charge of sin against God's elect, that is not first made when brought to the conscience of an awakened sinner; justice brought the charge against all the elect, in the eternal transactions between the Father and the Son; or how came Christ to be bail and Surety for them? Or how otherwise could there be a transfer of the charge from them to Christ? And where is the grace of a non-imputation of sin to them, and of an imputation of it to Christ, if it was not imputable to them, and chargeable on them?

3. It is urged, that strictly and accurately speaking, it cannot be said that justification is eternal, because the decree of justification is one thing, and justification itself another; even as God's will of sanctifying is one thing, and sanctification itself another; wherefore, though the decree of justification is eternal, and precedes faith, that itself is in time, and follows it. To which it

may be answered, that as God's decree and will to elect men to everlasting life and salvation, is his election of them; and his will not to impute sin to them, is the non-imputation of it; and his will to impute the righteousness of Christ unto them, is the imputation of it to them; so his decree, or will to justify them, is the justification of them, as that is an immanent act in God; which has its complete essence in his will, as election has; is entirely within himself, and not transient on an external subject, producing any real, physical, inherent change in it, as sanctification is and does; and therefore the case is not alike: it is one thing for God to will to act an act of grace concerning men, another thing to will to work a work of grace in them; in the former case, the will of God is his act of justification; in the latter it is not his act of sanctification; wherefore, though the will of God to justify, is justification itself, that being a complete act in his eternal mind, without men; yet his will to sanctify, is not sanctification, because that is a work wrought in men, and not only requires the actual existence of them but an exertion of powerful and efficacious grace upon them: was justification, as the papists say, by an infusion of inherent righteousness in men, there would be some strength in the objection; but this is not the case, and therefore there is none in it.

4. It is observed, that the apostle, reckoning up in order, the benefits which flow from the love of God to the elect, in his famous chain of salvation, sets calling before justification, as something antecedent to it, (Rom. 8:30) from whence it is concluded, that calling is in order of time, before justification. To which I reply, that the order of things in scripture is frequently inverted. The Jews have a saying, that there is nothing prior and posterior in the law; that is, that the order of things is not strictly observed; to put that first which is first, and that last which is last; but the order is changed, and therefore nothing strictly can be concluded from thence; even the order of persons in the Trinity is not always kept to, sometimes the Son is placed before the Father, and the Holy Spirit before them both; which, though it may be improved into an argument for their equality, yet not to destroy the order among them; and so with respect to calling, it may be observed, that it is sometimes placed before election, (2 Peter 1:10) but none but an Arminian would argue from thence, that it is really before it in order of time, or that men are not elected until they are called: on the other hand, salvation is placed before calling (2 Tim. 1:9). "Who hath saved us, and called us", &c. From whence we might, with as great propriety, argue, that salvation, and so justification, precedes calling; as to argue, from the other text in Romans, that calling precedes justification, in order of time. Indeed, nothing is to be concluded with certainty, one way or another, from

such modes and forms of expression. Justification, as a transient act, and declarative, follows calling; but as an immanent act in God, it goes before it, of which we are only speaking, as ought always to be remembered.

5. It is affirmed, that those various passages of scripture, where we are said to be justified through faith, and by fairly, have no other tendency than to show that faith is something prerequisite to justification, which cannot be said if justification was from eternity. To which the answer is, that those scriptures which speak of justification, through and by faith, do not militate against, nor disprove justification before faith; for though justification by and before faith differ, yet they are not opposite and contradictory. They differ, the one being an immanent act in God; all which sort of acts are eternal, and so before faith; the other being a transient declarative act, terminating on the conscience of the believer; and so is by and through faith, and follows it. But then these do not contradict each other, the one being a declaration and manifestation of the other. What scriptures may be thought to speak of faith, as a prerequisite to justification, cannot be understood as speaking of it as a prerequisite to the being of justification; for faith has no causal influence upon it, it adds nothing to its being, it is no ingredient in it, it is not the cause nor matter of it; at most, they can only be understood as speaking of faith as a prerequisite to the knowledge and comfort of it, and to a claim of interest in it; and this is readily allowed, that no man is evidentially and declaratively justified until he believes; that is, he cannot have the knowledge of it, nor any comfort from it; nor can he claim his interest in it, without faith; and this being observed, obviates another objection, that if justification is before faith, then faith is needless and useless. It is not so; it is not of use to justify men, which it is never said to do; but it is of use to receive the blessing of justification, and to enjoy the comfort of it.

6. It is asserted, that justification cannot be from eternity, but only in time, when a man actually believes and repents; otherwise it would follow, that he who is justified, and consequently has passed from death to life, and is become a child of God, and an heir of eternal life, abides still in death, and is a child of wrath, because he who is not yet converted, and lies in sin, abides in death, (1 John 3:14) and is of the devil, (1 John 3:8) and in a state of damnation, (Gal. 5:21) but this latter especially cannot be admitted of, with respect to God's elect, even while unconverted. And now, to remove this seeming difficulty, let it be observed, that the elect of God may be considered under two different "heads", Adam and Christ, and as related to two covenants at one and the same time; as they are the descendants of Adam, they are related to him as a covenant head, and as such, sinned in him, and judgment came upon them all to condemnation and death, and so they

are, by nature, children of wrath, even as others. But as considered in Christ, they are loved with an everlasting love, chosen in him before the world was, and always viewed and accounted righteous in him, and so secured from everlasting wrath and damnation; hence it is no contradiction to say, that the elect of God, as in Adam, and according to the covenant of works, are under the sentence of condemnation; and that as in Christ, and according to the covenant of grace, and the secret transactions thereof, they are justified, and saved from condemnation. This is no more a contradiction, than that they were loved with an everlasting love, and yet are children of wrath, at one and the same time, as they most certainly are; nor than that Jesus Christ was the object of his Father's love and wrath at the same time, he sustaining two different capacities, and standing in two different relations, when he suffered in the room and stead of his people; as the Son of God he was always the object of his love; as the Surety of his people, bearing their sins, and suffering for them, he was the object of his wrath, (Ps. 89:38).

7. It is urged what the apostle says (1 Cor. 6:11). "Now ye are justified"; as if they were not justified before; but the word now is not in the text; and was it, and admit that to be the sense of it, it does not follow that they were not justified before: for so they might be "in foro dei", in the court of God, and in his account from eternity, and in Christ their Head and Surety, and especially when he rose from the dead, before now; yet not till now be justified in "foro conscientiae", in their own consciences, and by the Spirit of God; which is the justification the apostle is there speaking of. In a word, the sentence of justification pronounced on Christ, the representative of his people, when he rose from the dead, and that which is pronounced by the Spirit of God in the consciences of believers, and that which will be pronounced before men and angels at the general judgment, are only so many repetitions, or renewed declarations, of that grand original sentence of it, conceived in the mind of God from all eternity; which is the eternal justification pleaded for; and is no other than what many eminent divines of the highest character for learning and judgment, have asserted, as before observed; and it is to such as these Dr. Owen refers, when he replied to Mr. Baxter, who charged him with holding eternal justification; "I neither am, nor ever was of that judgement; though as it may be explained, I know better, wiser, and more learned men than myself, (and he might have added, than Mr. Baxter,)that have been, and are.

Chapter 6

OF THE EVERLASTING COUNCIL BETWEEN THE THREE

DIVINE PERSONS, CONCERNING THE SALVATION OF MEN.

Having treated of the internal and immanent acts in the divine mind, and which are eternal; I shall next consider the operations and transactions among the three divine persons when alone, before the world began, or any creature was in being; and which are, chiefly the council and covenant of God, respecting the salvation of men: these are generally blended together by divines; and indeed it is difficult to consider them distinctly with exactness and precision; but I think they are to be distinguished, and the one to be considered as leading on, and as preparatory and introductory to the other, though both of an eternal date; and shall begin with the council of God, held between the three divine persons, Father, Son and Spirit, concerning the affair of man's salvation before the world was. And it will be proper to enquire. 1. First, In what sense counsel, consultation and deliberation, can be ascribed to God, to the divine persons; and,

la. This is not to be understood as expressive of any want of knowledge, or of the least degree of ignorance in God, or of his being at a loss in forming the scheme of salvation; since he is a God of knowledge, of all knowledge, is perfect in knowledge, wanting nothing; is the only wise and all- wise God, whose understanding is infinite, and reaches to all things, and nothing can escape it: want of knowledge is often the case with men, and therefore they deliberate with themselves, and consult with others; but it is not so with God; wherefore,

lb. Consultation in him is not in order to gain more knowledge, or to obtain more satisfaction, and so more pleasure in the review of things; for since his understanding is infinite, there can be no accession to it, nor increase of knowledge in it: men consult with themselves, and reason on things in their own minds, or consult with others to gain more knowledge; and if this is not the result of it, yet it gives them satisfaction and pleasure, when those they have an high opinion of agree with them, and approve of their schemes; this makes their minds more easy, and confirms and settles them; and thus in the multitude of counsellors there is safety and delight (see Prov. 11:14, 27:9). Nor,

lc. Does a council held between the three divine persons suppose any inequality between them; usually indeed with men, in matters of moment and difficulty, persons supposed to be of superior abilities are consulted, and their judgment taken; as Ahithophel by David, and the Israelites, whose counsel with them was as the oracles of God; but this is not to be supposed here, when the Father consults with the Son and Spirit, it is not because they have knowledge superior to him, or that he needs any information from them; they are one in nature; and are equal in knowledge and understanding;

the Father is omniscient, the Son knows all things, and the Spirit searches the deep things of God; and yet may consult together; and three persons of equal knowledge and judgment among men may consult together about an affair of importance, without supposing any superiority and inferiority in them. l d. Nor is consultation in God continued, carried on and protracted to any length, as it often is with men, who when they have a matter of difficulty before them, do not suddenly and at once determine; but take time and consider it in every point of view, that they may fix on the wisest and most rational method of acting; consultations on an affair have been sometimes held many days successively; but so it is not with God, counsel with him is as quick as thought, yea, it is no other than his thought, and therefore they go together (Ps. 33:11). But,

ldl. When consultation about the salvation of man is ascribed to God, it is intended to express the importance of it; not things trifling, but those of importance, are what men consult about and deliberate upon; such is the work of mens salvation of the greatest moment, not only to men, to their comfort and happiness here and hereafter, but to the glory of God; the glory of all whose perfections is greatly displayed in it, being so wisely contrived as it is for that purpose; wherefore it is not put upon any footing; nor into any hands, but into the hands of the Son of God (Ps. 21:5; John 17:4). Id2. This way of speaking is used to set forth the wisdom of God displayed herein; schemes, which are the fruit of consultation and deliberation, are generally the most wisely formed, and best succeed: in the scheme of salvation by Christ, God has abounded in all wisdom and prudence; it is the manifold wisdom of God, in which that is displayed in the greatest fulness and variety; insomuch that angels, those wise and knowing creatures, desire to look more and more into it (Eph. 1:7, 8, 3:10). Id3. This being the effect of a council between the three divine persons, shows their unanimity in it; as they are one in nature, so they agree in one; and as in everything, so in this, the salvation of men; the Father signified his mind that his Son should be sent to be the Saviour of men, when he may be supposed to put such a question as in Isaiah 6:8. "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" The Son, knowing his Father's will, and assenting to it, declared his agreement with it, "Here am I, send me"; and the Spirit approving of the Father's motion, and the Son's consent, joined with the divine Father in the mission of him; "Now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me", (Isa. 48:16) and what inexpressible pleasure must such unanimity give to a believing soul, to declare which is the design of the divine consultation. These things being observed, I shall endeavour,

2. Secondly, To give some proof that there was a council between the divine persons concerning the salvation of men. 2a. An argument in favour

of this may be drawn from the purpose of God; all whose purposes are called his counsels because they are founded in the highest wisdom, (Isa. 25:1) now the purpose of God respecting the salvation of men, is the basis and foundation of the council held concerning it, in which purpose, as well as council, all the three persons are concerned; for the scheme of salvation, which is, "the manifold wisdom of God, is according to the eternal purpose which he" (God the Father) "purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord", (Eph. 3:10, 11) and the Son was not only privy to this purpose or counsel, and agreed to it; but the Spirit also, who searches "the deep things of God", and approves of them, which are no other than the purposes and counsels of his heart (1 Cor. 2:10).

2b. It appears there was a consultation held about the salvation of men from the gospel, which is an exhibition and declaration of the scheme of salvation, being called the counsel of God, (Acts 20:27) and the wisdom of God, the hidden wisdom ordained before the world, (1 Cor. 2:6) for it is no other indeed than a transcript of the council and covenant of grace; the sum and substance of the word and ministry of reconciliation, is that eternal transaction between God and Christ concerning it, which the apostle thus expresses; God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses (2 Cor. 5:19).

2c. It may be reasonably concluded, from the consultation had between the divine Persons, concerning the formation of man, thus expressed, "And God said, Let us make man in our image"; which was said, not to angels, but to the other two divine Persons, the Son and Spirit; and it is not necessary to understand the words as spoken the moment, or immediately before the creation of man, but as spoken in eternity, in council between the divine Persons; for it may be rendered, "God had said"; and, indeed, God had determined on this in the decree of election; for as in the decree of the end, he chose some of the creatures his power could make, to be happy with him, for his own glory; so in the decree of the means, he resolved on the creation of them; as has been before observed; however, be it, that this consultation was immediately before the creation of man, as all the three Persons were concerned in that, and in his creation; it may be reasonably argued, that if there was a consultation of the divine Persons about the making of man at first, then much more about the redemption and salvation of him. But,

2d. What would put this matter out of all doubt, is the sense of a passage in Zechariah 6:13 as given by some learned men, if it can be established; "And the counsel of peace shall be between them both": some, indeed, interpret it of the Kingly and Priestly offices meeting in Christ, and of the unanimity of them in him; since it is before said, "He shall be a priest upon the throne";

but it seems rather to respect persons and things. Others have thought of Zerubbabel the prince, and Joshua the high priest, who were unanimously agreed in building the second temple: but an edifice of another kind, and of a spiritual nature, the church of God, seems to be intended, the building of which is ascribed to a single Person only. Rather by the "counsel of peace", may be meant the gospel, called the counsel of God, and the gospel of peace, which was to be, and has been among Jews and Gentiles, preached to them, both as to them that are nigh, so to them afar off, as in Zechariah 6:15 and which was a means of making peace between them, and reconciling them together, (Eph. 2:17, 6:15) and in this sense of the words I formerly acquiesced: but there is another sense of them embraced by learned men, to whose judgment I pay a great deference; such as Heidegger, De Dieu, Cocceius, Witsius, Dr. Owen, and others, that this respects the council concerning the peace and reconciliation in eternity, between Jehovah and the Branch, between the Father and the Son, who in time was to become man. My objections to this sense have been that this council in eternity was between the three Persons, and not two only; and that is what is past; whereas this is spoken of as future: but when I consider that Jehovah and the Branch are the only Persons mentioned in the text, and so could only, with propriety, be spoken of, though the council was between the three; and that, in the Hebrew language, tenses are frequently put for one another, the past for the future, and so the future for the past; and things are said to be, when they appear to be, though they are before; the sense may be, that when the Man, the Branch, should grow out of his place, and build the temple, and bear the glory, and sit a priest on his throne, then it should clearly appear, that there had been a council of peace between them both, which was the ground and foundation of all: and in this light, this sense of the passage may be admitted, and so be a proof of the point under consideration. But if this is not the truth of this text; yet,

2e. That there has been such a transaction between the Father and the Son, which, with propriety enough, may be called the "counsel of peace", we have sufficient warrant from 2 Corinthians 5:19. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses"; by the "world" is meant the elect of God, he so loved, as to send his Son to be the Saviour of, and for the life of whom Christ gave his flesh, (John 3:16, 6:51) and about the peace and reconciliation of those, or in what way to make peace and atonement for them, God was in Christ, or with Christ, consulting, contriving, and planning the scheme of it; which was this, not to impute their sins unto them, but to Christ, now called to be the Saviour of them; and this contains the sum of what we mean by the council of peace. I

proceed,

3. Thirdly, To observe, that the three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, and they only, were concerned in this council. 3a. Not angels, for they were not then in being, they were not made till the heavens were. But this council was before the heavens and the earth were made; and besides, the angels are the creatures of God, his ministering spirits, and therefore he would never consult with them; they knew nothing of this transaction until it was revealed unto them: and when it was, many of them, as some think, were offended at it, left their habitation, and apostatised from God; not being able to endure it, that the Son of God, in human nature, should be their Head, and so that nature be advanced above theirs, which they perceived by this step would be the case: and as for those that stood and kept their first estate, they were so far from assisting in this council, that they were entirely unacquainted with it, until it was made known unto them; and when it was, though they highly approved of it, their knowledge of it seemed to be imperfect; since they desire to look more and more into it, and "even do" learn of the church the manifold wisdom of God in it (1 Peter 1:12; Eph. 3:10).

3b. Nor were men a party in this council; "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor?" (Rom. 11:34) not any of the sons of men; for these also were not then in being, and when they were, were but creatures, and soon became sinful ones, and destitute of true wisdom and knowledge, and so unfit to be of such a council, had it been in time; and had God summoned all the individuals of human nature together, and proposed it to them, that if they could find out a way how they could be saved, consistent with his divine perfections, he would willingly save them; after ever so long a time allowed them for consultation about it; and even if they had the assistance of all the angels in heaven, they must have returned an "ignoramus", and owned they knew not any. No, none but the blessed Three in One were of this council, and fit to be of it; the thing consulted about was "nodus Deo vindice dignus", worthy only of God.

3bl. Jehovah the Father, the first Person in order of nature, though not of time, may reasonably be supposed to give the lead in this affair, and proposed the thing to be debated and advised about; he who, concerning the creation of man, proposed it to the other two Persons, might, with great propriety, move for a consultation about his salvation: who is the Ancient of days, with whom is wisdom, and who hath counsel and understanding, yea, is wonderful in counsel, as well as excellent in working; and so infinitely fit to conduct an affair of this nature (Job 12:12, 13; Isa. 28:29).

3b2. Jehovah the Son, has the same wisdom, counsel, and understanding

his Father has; for all that he hath are his; nor does Christ think it any robbery to be equal with him; he is wisdom itself, or "wisdoms", he is possessed of the most consummate wisdom; in him, even as Mediator, are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and he himself says, "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom", (Prov. 1:20, 8:14; Col. 2:3) yea, he is called "the Wonderful, Counsellor", (Isa. 9:6) which not only respects his capacity and ability to give the best counsel and advice to men, as he does, but to assist in the council of God himself; and so the "Septuagint" interpreters understood that passage, rendering it, "the Angel of the great council"; whereby it seems as if those Jews then had a notion of this great transaction, and of the concern of the Messiah in it; to whom the whole verse belongs: to which may be added, that Christ the Son of God, was as one brought up with his divine Father, lay in his bosom, was privy to his designs, and must be in his council, and was on all accounts fit for it.

3b3. The Holy Spirit had a concern in this council, and was fit to be of it; Epiphanius says, as the Son is the Angel of the great council, so is the Holy Spirit; he is not only the Spirit of wisdom to men, and by whom is given to them, to one the word of wisdom, and to another the word of knowledge; and therefore must be possessed of the most perfect wisdom and knowledge himself, (Eph. 1:17; 1 Cor. 12:8) but he is the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, and of counsel and knowledge, to and resting on Christ as Mediator, (Isa. 11:2) and therefore must be a very proper Person to be concerned with the Father and the Son, in this great council; for never was such a council held as this, between such Persons, and on such a momentous and interesting affair. Which, 4. Fourthly, Is next to be considered more particularly and distinctly. Now the affair consulted about, was not the salvation of men merely; nor who should be the persons that should be saved with it; for both that was resolved on, and the persons fixed on who were to enjoy it, in the decree of election, which stands firm and sure on the unalterable will of God; but who should be the Saviour, or be the author of this salvation; and a proper person for this work, could never have been devised, found out, and settled upon, by men and angels; this was the business of this great council. By the decree of election the vessels of mercy were prepared for glory, or were ordained to eternal life, God resolved to have mercy on them, and save them; but who should be the saviour, was referred to this council to agree upon; it is true, indeed, that this was, in some respect, involved and included in the Father's purpose, according to election, who appointed some, not unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, (1 Thess. 5:9) but then, though this was in the Father's purpose, it was necessary that the will of the Son should be expressed, and

his approbation and consent had; for which this council was called and held. The case stands thus: it was in Jehovah the Father's thoughts, to save men by his Son; he in his infinite wisdom saw he was the fittest person for this work, and, in his own mind, chose him to it; and this is meant by laying help on One that is mighty, exalting one chosen from among the people; finding David his servant, and anointing him with his holy oil (Ps. 89:19, 20). Now in the eternal council he moved it, and proposed it to his Son, as the most advisable step that could be taken, to bring about the designed salvation; who readily agreed to it, and said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God", (Heb. 10:7) from Psalm 40:7, 8 and the Holy Spirit expressed his approbation of him, as the fittest person to be the Saviour, by joining with the Father in the mission of him, as before observed; and by forming his human nature in time, and filling it with his gifts and graces without measure. The pleasure and satisfaction the three divine Persons had in this affair, thus advised to, consulted, and approved of, is most clearly to be seen and observed at our Lord's baptism (Matthew 3:16, 17). But not only it was in this council consulted, who should be the Author of salvation; but also in what way and manner it should be effected, both for the security of men, and for the display of the glory of the divine perfections. Now it should be observed, that the elect of God, the persons to be saved, were considered in this transaction as fallen creatures, which salvation by Christ supposes; as sinners in Adam, on whom judgment came unto condemnation, as obnoxious to the curses of the righteous law, and to the resentments of divine justice; and therefore satisfaction must be made to the law and justice of God, the law must be fulfilled, and justice satisfied, by an atonement made; this was signified to the Saviour found, who approved of it, as a most fit thing to be done; hence God is gracious, and saith, "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom", (Job 33:24) this was found by infinite wisdom in this council; and whereas this ransom, satisfaction, and atonement, must be made by obeying the precepts of the law, and by the suffering of death, the penalty of it; this the law required of the transgressor of it; "Thou shalt surely die"; and so of the Surety for him; wherefore, since it was necessary that the Captain and Author of salvation, in bringing many sons to glory, should be made perfect through sufferings; it was proper that he should assume a nature in which he would be capable of obeying and suffering, even a nature of the same kind with that which sinned; this was notified in council to the Son of God, and he approved of it as right and fit, and said, "A body hast thou prepared me", a whole human nature, in purpose; and now in council, signified he was ready to assume it in time. Moreover, it was seen proper and advisable, that the human nature assumed, should be holy and pure from sin, that it might be

offered up without spot to God; and be a sacrifice to take away sin, which it could not be, if sinful; now here a difficulty arises, how such a nature could be come at, since human nature would be defiled by the sin of Adam; and who would be able to bring a clean thing out of an unclean? This difficulty infinite wisdom surmounts, by proposing that the Saviour should be born of a virgin; that this individual nature to be assumed, should not descend from Adam by ordinary generation, but be formed in an extraordinary manner by the power of the Holy Ghost; and this was approved in council, by both the Son and Spirit, since the one readily assumed this nature in this way, and the other formed it. Once more, it appeared necessary that this nature should be taken up into personal union with the Son of God; or, that the Saviour should be God and man in one person; that he should be man, that he might have somewhat to offer, and thereby make reconciliation for the sins of the people; and that he should be God, to give virtue to his deeds and sufferings, to make them effectual to the purposes of them, and he be a fit Mediator, a days-man between God and men, and take care of the things belonging to both. In short, the affair debated and consulted between the three divine persons, was the peace and reconciliation of God's elect by Christ, and the way and manner of doing it; and therefore, as before observed, this transaction may, with great propriety, be called, the council of peace; and which issued in a covenant of peace, next to be considered; in this council everything relative to it was advised, consulted, and contrived; and in the covenant the whole was adjusted and settled; and therefore I have considered the council as the preparation and introduction to the covenant.

Chapter 7

OF THE EVERLASTING COVENANT OF GRACE, BETWEEN THE FATHER, AND THE SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The council before treated of, is the basis and foundation of the Covenant of grace, and both relate to the same thing, and in which the same persons are concerned. In the former, things were contrived, planned, and advised; in the latter, fixed and settled. The covenant of grace is a compact or agreement made from all eternity among the divine Persons, more especially between the Father and the Son, concerning the salvation of the elect. For the better understanding these federal transactions between them, before the world was, when there were no creatures, neither angels nor men in being; and which lay the foundation of all the grace and glory, comfort and happiness, of the saints in time and to eternity; it may be proper to consider,

1. The etymology and signification of the words used for "covenant", in the writings of the Old and New Testament, by which it will appear with

what propriety these transactions may be called a "covenant". The books of the Old Testament were written in Hebrew, and the Hebrew word for "covenant", throughout those writings is קְבְּר "Berith"; which, by different persons, is derived from different roots. There are a set of men lately risen up, who derive the word from ד "Barar", which signifies, to "purify"; and because the word we translate "make", which usually goes along with "covenant", signifies, to "cut off", they warmly contend, that wherever we meet with this phrase, it should be rendered, "cut off the Purifier" by whom they understand the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, though it will be allowed, that Christ is sometimes called a Refiner and Purifier, (Mai. 3:3) yet not by any word or name derived from this root; nor is it likely, that a "Purifier", or "he that purifies", should be expressed by a noun feminine, as "Berith" is; and not by a noun masculine, or a participle belonging to this root; and though such a version of the phrase may happen to suit tolerably well with a passage or two; yet there are many places in which, were it so rendered, no sense could be made of them. If the word has the signification of purity, as a word of the same letters, though differently pointed has, being twice translated "soap", (Jer. 2:22; Mai. 3:2) which is of a detersive, cleansing, and purifying nature. Rather as this is used for covenant, it may denote the purity of intention, and sincerity of heart, that ought to be in all persons that enter into covenant with each other; and which is most eminently true of the pure and holy divine persons, in their covenant engagements. But the word "Berith, covenant", may rather be derived, as it more commonly is, either from דִּכ "Bara"; which, in the first sense of the word, signifies to "create"; a covenant being made with man, as soon almost as he was created, which covenant he transgressed, (Hosea 6:7) but the covenant of grace was made before the creation of man; though it was first made manifest quickly after his fall, which was not long after his creation; the sum and substance of which lies in those words, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head" (Gen. 3:15). The word, in a secondary sense, may signify, to order or dispose of things; as in creation things were disposed and put in an orderly manner, and with this may agree, the words אפסגמנס, and 8אִ0רכָּר֯, used of a covenant in the New Testament, which signify, a disposing of things in a covenant or testamentary way. It is further observed by some, that the same Hebrew word, in another conjugation, signifies to "cut" in pieces and divide, and think that a covenant has its name from hence, because it was usual at making covenants, to slay creatures for sacrifice, and cut them in pieces, and lay them by each other, and the covenanters to pass between them; of which rite (see Gen. 15:9, 10, 17; Jer. 34:18) to which way of making a covenant by sacrifice, the allusion may be in Psalm 50:5. Or else the word

may be derived from דהפ "Barah"; which, among other things, signifies to "eat" food; it being usual, when covenants were made and confirmed, for the parties covenanting, to eat and feast together; as did Abimelech and Isaac, Laban and Jacob, (Gen. 26:30, 31:46) and it may be observed, that the Lord's Supper, which is a feast, is a commemoration of the ratification of the covenant of grace, by the blood of Christ, and wherein and whereby the faith of God's people is strengthened and confirmed, as to their interest in it. But after all, it may be best to derive the word from this root, as it signifies to select and choose, and the rather, since all those roots, דהפ דכי דה have this signification; and which well agrees with a covenant, into which persons, of their own will and choice, enter; choose the persons to be concerned with them, the terms and conditions on which they covenant with each other, and the things and persons they covenant about; all which entirely agrees with this federal transaction, or covenant of grace we are about to treat of. The word used in the New Testament for "covenant", is διαθήκη, by which word the Septuagint interpreters almost always translate the Hebrew word "berith" in the Old, and comes from a word which signifies to "dispose", and that in a covenant way, as in Luke 22:29, where the Father is said to appoint, or dispose, by covenant, a kingdom to his Son, as he also is said to appoint, or dispose by covenant, a kingdom to his people; and the word from it, is used for a covenant in (Acts 3:25) and in other places; and sometimes for a testament, or a man's last will, (Heb. 9:16, 17) and we shall see the use of the word in this sense hereafter, as it may be applicable to the covenant of grace; the word signifies both covenant and testament, and some have called it a covenant testament, or a testamentary covenant; hence the different administrations of the covenant of grace in time, are called the first and second, the Old and New Testament; and even the books of scripture, written under those different dispensations, are so distinguished (see Heb. 8:1-13; 2 Cor. 3:6, 14). In the next place it may not be improper to observe,

2. In what sense the word "covenant" is used in scripture, which may serve to lead into the nature of it. And,

2a. It is sometimes used for an ordinance, precept, and command; so the order for giving the heave offerings to the sons of Aaron, is called a covenant of salt, a perpetual ordinance, (Num. 18:19) the law for releasing servants after six years service, has the name of a covenant, (Jer. 34:13, 14) and this may account for the Decalogue, or Ten Commands, being called a covenant, (Deut. 4:13) for whatsoever God enjoins men, they are under an obligation to observe, nor have they a right to refuse obedience to it; and, indeed, the covenant of works made with Adam, was much of the same nature, only he had a will, consenting to obey, the bias of it being to the will of God, as well

as power to perform. 2b. A covenant, when ascribed to God, is often nothing more than a mere promise; "This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, my Spirit that is upon thee", &c. (Isa. 59:21) hence we read of "covenants of promise", or promissory covenants, (Eph. 2:12) and, indeed, the covenant of grace, with respect to the elect, is nothing else but a free promise of eternal life and salvation by Jesus Christ, which includes all other promises of blessings of grace in it; "This is the promise that he hath promised us", the grand comprehensive promise, "even eternal life", (1 John 2:25) and which is absolute and unconditional, with respect to them; whatever condition is in that covenant, lay only on Christ to perform; he and his work are the only condition of it. And so,

2c. We often read of covenants of God only on one side; of this kind is his covenant of the day and of the night, (Jer. 33:20) which is no other than a promise that these should always continue, without requiring any condition on the part of the creature, (Gen. 8:22) and the covenant he made with Noah and his posterity, and with every living creature, with which latter especially, there could be no restipulation, (Gen. 9:9-17) and so the covenant he promised to make for his, people, with the beasts of the field, could be no other than a mere promise of security from harm by them (Hosea 2:18). But,

2d. A covenant properly made between man and man, is by stipulation and restipulation, in which they make mutual promises, or conditions, to be performed by them; whether to maintain friendship among themselves, and to strengthen themselves against their common enemies, or to do mutual service to each other, and to their respective posterities; such was the confederacy between Abraham, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; and the covenant between Abimelech and Isaac, and between David and Jonathan (Gen. 14:13, 26:28; 1 Sam. 20:15, 16, 42, 23:18). Now, 2e. Such a covenant, properly speaking, cannot be made between God and man; for what can man restipulate with God, which is in his power to do or give to him, and which God has not a prior right unto? God may, indeed, condescend to promise that to man, which otherwise he is not bound to give; and he may require of man, that which he has no right to refuse, and God has a right unto, without making any such promise; and therefore, properly speaking, all this cannot formally constitute a covenant, which is to be entered into of free choice on both sides; and especially such a covenant cannot take place in fallen man, who has neither inclination of will to yield the obedience required, nor power to perform it. But, 2f. The covenant of grace made between God and Christ, and with the elect in him, as their Head and Representative, is a proper covenant, consisting of stipulation and restipulation; God the Father in it stipulates with his Son, that he shall do such and such work and service, on

condition of which he promises to confer such and such honours and benefits on him, and on the elect in him; and Christ the Son of God restipulates and agrees to do all that is proposed and prescribed, and, upon performance, expects and claims the fulfilment of the promises: in this compact there are mutual engagements each party enters into, stipulate and restipulate about, which make a proper formal covenant (see Isa. 49:1-6, 53:10-12; Ps. 40:6-8; John 17:4, 5). Which passages of scripture will be produced, and more fully opened hereafter. 3. The names and epithets given to this federal transaction, or covenant of grace, between the Father and Son, both in the scriptures and among men, may deserve some notice, since they may help to give a better and clearer idea of this transaction. 3a. It is called, "a covenant of life", (Mai. 2:5) for though it is said of Levi, yet of him as a type of Christ; and if the covenant with Levi might be so called, much more that with Christ. Some divines call the covenant of works, made with Adam, a covenant of life, and so it may be; but then only as it respected that natural happy life Adam then lived, and as it contained a promise of continuance of it, and confirmation in it, should he stand the trial of his obedience; but not a promise of eternal life and happiness, such as the saints enjoy in heaven; for such a life was never designed to be given by, nor could come through a covenant of works (see Gal. 3:21). But the covenant of grace contains such a promise, a promise that was made by God, that cannot lie, before the world was; that is, a promise made to Christ, in the covenant of grace, from eternity, who then existed as the federal Head of his people, to whom it was made, and in whose hands it is put for them; he asked life of his Father for them in this covenant, and he gave it to him, even length of days for ever and ever; and therefore with great propriety may this covenant be called, a covenant of life (see Titus 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:1; Ps. 21:4). 3b. It is called "a covenant of peace" (Mai. 2:5, Isa. 54:10). As the transaction between the eternal Three, in which the plan and method of the peace and reconciliation of God's elect was consulted, may be called "the council of peace"; because that was a principal article considered in it; so, for the same reason, the covenant may be called the covenant of peace; for what was concerted in the council of peace concerning it, was fixed and settled in the covenant: as, that the Son of God, in human nature, should be the Peace Maker, and should make peace by the shedding of his blood; and hence, in the fulness of time, he was sent to be the Man, the Peace, according to promise and prophecy, founded upon this covenant, (Mic. 5:2, 5) and had the "chastisement of peace" laid upon him; that is, the punishment for the sins of the elect inflicted on him, whereby their peace and reconciliation was made, (Isa. 53:6) all which was by his own consent, and in consequence of the covenant made between him and his Father, and which, therefore, is

rightly called "the covenant of peace". 3c. It is commonly called by men, "the covenant of grace"; and properly enough, since it entirely flows from, and has its foundation in the grace of God: it is owing to the everlasting love and free favour of God the Father, that he proposed a covenant of this kind to his Son; and it is owing to the grace of the Son, that he so freely and voluntarily entered into engagements with his Father; the matter, sum, and substance of it is grace; it consists of grants and blessings of grace to the elect in Christ; and the ultimate end and design of it is the glory of the grace of God.

3d. It is by some divines called, "the covenant of redemption"; and very truly, because the redemption of God's elect is a principal article in it: the Father proposed to the Son, that he should raise up, restore, redeem Israel, his chosen ones; the Son agreed to it, and hence he was declared and promised, and expected as the Redeemer, long before he came into this world to do this service; Job knew him as his living Redeemer, and all the Old Testament saints waited for him as such, having had a promise of it, which was founded on this covenant agreement; for as it was proposed to him, and he agreed to it, to be the Redeemer, so it was promised him, that upon the condition of giving himself, the redemption and ransom price for the elect, they should be delivered from all their sins, and the effects of them, and out of the hands of all their enemies; see (Isa. 49:5, 59:20; Job 33:24). But then,

3e. This covenant is the same with the covenant of grace; some divines, indeed, make them distinct covenants; the covenant of redemption, they say, was made with Christ in eternity; the covenant of grace with the elect, or with believers, in time: but this is very wrongly said; there is but one covenant of grace, and not two, in which the Head and Members, the Redeemer and the persons to be redeemed, Christ and the elect, are concerned; in which he is the Head and Representative of them, acts for them, and on their behalf. What is called a covenant of redemption, is a covenant of grace, arising from the grace of the Father, who proposed to his Son to be the Redeemer, and from the grace of the Son, who agreed to be so; and even the honours proposed to the Son in this covenant, redounded to the advantage of the elect; and the sum and substance of the everlasting covenant made with Christ, is the salvation and eternal happiness of the chosen ones; all the blessings and grants of grace to them, are secured in that eternal compact; for they were blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, and had grace given them in him before the world was; wherefore there can be no foundation for such a distinction between a covenant of redemption in eternity, and a covenant of grace in time.

4. The contracting parties concerned in this covenant, are next to be considered more particularly and distinctly. This covenant is commonly

represented as if it was only between the Father and the Son; but I see not why the Holy Spirit should be excluded, since he is certainly promised in it both to Head and members; and in consequence of it, is sent down into the hearts of God's covenant ones, to make application of the blessings, promises, and grace of the covenant to them, and to work a work of grace in them; all which must be by agreement, and with his consent; and I think there are some traces, and some footsteps of all the three Persons, as concerned in it, in the dispensation and manifestation of this covenant to the people of Israel (Hag. 2:4,5). However, as in all covenants the contracting parties are,

4a. Distinct from each other, so in this; a covenant is not of one, but of more than one; no man covenants with himself; at least such a covenant is not properly one; Job is, indeed, said to make a covenant with his eyes, (Job 31:1) but that was no other than a resolution within himself to lay a restraint upon his eyes, not to make use of them in such a manner as might tend to sin. The divine Persons of the sacred Trinity are distinct Persons, as has been proved in the article on that subject. And so they appear to be in their federal transactions with each other. He that called his Son to service, and directed him, or proposed the work he should do, "to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved of Israel", &c. (Isa. 49:3, 5, 6) must be distinct from him to whom he proposed all this; and he who in compliance with it said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God!" (Ps. 40:7, 8; Heb. 10:7) must be distinct from him whose will he was so ready to do, and whom he calls his Lord and God, as he was, by virtue of his covenant relation to him: and the Spirit, who was sent by them both, in consequence of a covenant agreement, to be the Comforter of the covenant ones, must be distinct from either.

4b. As they are distinct Persons, so they have distinct acts of will; for though their nature and essence is but one, which is common to them all, and so their will but one; yet there are distinct acts of this will, put forth by and peculiar to each distinct Person: thus their nature being the same, their understanding must be the same; and yet there are distinct acts of the divine, understanding, peculiar to each Person; the Father knows the Son, and the Son knows the Father, and they have a distinct knowledge and understanding of one another, and the Spirit knows them both, and they know him. And as their nature and essence, so their affections are the same; and yet there are distinct acts of them, peculiar to each Person; the Father loves the Son, and has put all things into his hands; the Son loves the Father, and is in all things obedient to him; the Spirit loves the Father and the Son, and they both love him: so their will, though the same, there are distinct acts of it, peculiar to each Person; and which appear in their covenanting with each other, and are necessary to it: there is the Father's distinct act of will

notified in the covenant, that it is his will and pleasure his Son should be the Saviour of the chosen ones; and there is the Son's distinct act of will notified in the same covenant, he presenting himself, and declaring himself willing, and engaging himself to be the Saviour of them; which distinct acts of the divine will thus notified, formally constituted a covenant between them; and as the holy Spirit dispenses his gifts and grace, the blessings of this covenant, "severally as he will", (1 Cor. 12:11) this is pursuant to an agreement, to a notification of his will in covenant also.

4c. These contracting Parties entered into covenant freely and voluntarily, of their own choice, as all covenantors do, or should; hence the Hebrew word for covenant, as has been observed, comes from a root, which signifies to choose; because men choose their own terms and conditions, on which they agree to enter into covenant with each other, not being compelled and forced thereunto. So it is in this everlasting covenant, the Parties were at entire liberty to enter or not into it: the Father was under no necessity, nor under any obligation to save men; he could, in consistence with his justice, and the other perfections of his nature, have destroyed the whole world of men, as he destroyed all the angels that sinned; he was not obliged to make a covenant with his Son to save them; it was of his own choice he did it; who will have mercy on whom he will have mercy: nor was the Son compelled to enter into this covenant; but knowing his Father's will, and agreeing to it, voluntarily engaged in it, and said, "Lo, I come to do thy will": and as the Spirit freely bestows his grace, and the gifts of it in time, so he freely engaged to do it in the covenant in eternity.

4d. What they agreed in covenant, was what was in their power to perform; if one man enters into a covenant with another, and agrees to do what is not in his power, and which he knows it is not, when he enters into covenant, this is a fraud and an imposition on him, with whom he covenants; and in course the covenant is null and void. But the contracting parties in the covenant of grace, are able to perform whatever they covenanted about: the Father is able to make good all that he has promised in it, either to his Son or to the elect in him; and the Son is able to do the work he engaged to do; he had power to assume human nature into union with his divine Person, and to lay down his life in that nature, having such a power over his own life, and to dispose of it at pleasure, as no mere man ever had; and so being God, as well as man, was able to work out the salvation of his people, which he undertook; the Father knew he was able to save them, and therefore laid help on him, and called him to this work; and he knew himself to be equal to it, and therefore engaged in it: and the Holy Spirit is a Spirit of power and might, and so able to perform the part he took in this covenant. 4e. As in all

covenants, however, the persons covenanting may be equal in other respects, yet in covenanting there is an inequality and subordination; especially in covenants, in which there is service and work to be done on one side, and a reward to be given in consideration of it on the other; of which nature is the covenant of grace and redemption; and though the contracting parties in it are equal in nature, perfections, and glory, yet in this covenant relation they voluntarily entered into, there is by agreement and consent a subordination; hence the Father, the first Person and Party contracting is called by his Son, his Lord and his God, a phrase always expressive of covenant relation; (see Ps. 16:2, 22:1, 40:8, 45:7; John 20:17) and the Son, the second Person and Party contracting, is called by the Father his Servant; "Thou art my Servant", &c. (Isa. 49:3) hence the Father is said to be "greater than he", (John 14:28) not merely on account of his human nature, about which there could be no difficulty in admitting it; but with respect to his covenant relation to him, and the office capacity he has taken and sustains in it: and the Spirit, the third Person and contracting Party, he is said to be sent both by the Father and the Son, to perform that part which he undertook in it: and this economy and dispensation of the covenant, thus settled in subordination among themselves by agreement and consent, is done with great propriety, beauty, and decency, suitable to their natural relations they bear to each other, as equal divine Persons for who so proper to be the proposer of terms in the covenant, to direct and prescribe them, and to exercise a kind of authority, as he who is the first Person in order of nature, and that stands in the relation of a Father to the second Person; and since here was work and service to be done, the salvation of the elect, and that in an inferior nature, in human nature, who so proper to engage in this service, and to assume this nature, and in it yield obedience to the will of God, than the second Person, who stood in the relation of a Son to the First? And with what congruity is the third Person, the Holy Spirit, sent by both, to make application of the grace of both; who is said to be their Breath, and to proceed from both. 4f. As in all covenants some advantages are proposed unto, and expected by all parties concerned, so in this; as God's end in all things, in nature, providence, and grace, is his own glory, so it is in this covenant, even the glory of Father, Son, and Spirit; which must be understood not of any addition unto, or increase of their essential glory, but of the manifestation of it; otherwise, as Christ is represented saying to his Father, "My goodness extendeth not to thee"; thou art not the better for my surety-ship engagements in covenant, and the performance of them; thou hast no real profit and advantage thereby; no new accession of glory and happiness accrues to thee by it; but the real profit and advantage resulting from hence is, "to the saints that are in the earth,

and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight" (Ps. 16:2, 3). As for the glory promised to Christ, and which he expected and pleaded on his finishing his work, (John 17:4, 5) this was either the manifestation of the glory of his divine Person, hid in his state of humiliation; or his glory as Mediator, his kingdom and glory, as such appointed to him, and promised him, upon the performance of his engagements, (Luke 22:29; 1 Peter 1:21; Heb. 2:9) of which more hereafter; and yet, even the benefit of this redounds to the advantage of God's elect, (John 17:22, 24) it is their salvation and happiness that is the grand thing in view in these covenant transactions; this is "all my salvation" (2 Sam. 23:5). As the sum of the gospel, which is no other than a transcript of the covenant of grace, is the salvation of lost sinners by Christ; so the covenant, of which that is a copy, chiefly respects that, and that is the result of it: hence Christ, the Covenantee, has the name of Jesus, because he undertook to save, and came to save, and has saved his people from their sins, in consequence of his covenant engagements.

Chapter 8

OF THE PART WHICH THE FATHER TAKES IN THE COVENANT.

The various parts which each contracting Party take in this covenant, are next to be considered. The Father, the first person in the Trinity, takes the first place, and gives the lead in this covenant. "All things are of God", that is, of God the Father; they are of him originally, they begin with him; all things in creation; he has made the world, and created all things by his Son; and so all things in the salvation of men, "who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ"; he set on foot the council of peace, and so the covenant of peace, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself"; that is, God the Father; he planned the reconciliation of men in council, and proposed it in covenant, and settled it with the other two persons; and he is not only the proposer, but the prescriber and enjoiner of things in the covenant; he both proposed the work to be done, and took upon him the authority, by agreement, to prescribe and enjoin it: hence we read of the injunctions and commands laid on Christ with respect to his discharge of his office, as the mediator of this covenant, (John 10:18, 12:49, 14:31) it was the Father that called Christ from the womb of eternity to be his servant, and directed and enjoined his work and service, as appears from (Isa. 49:1- 6) and promised a reward to him on condition of his performing the service, and to bestow benefits on the elect in him, and for his sake. And let us,

1. First, Consider the work he proposed to Christ, which is the great and only condition of the covenant, and which he prescribed and enjoined him

to do; which was, la. To take the care and charge of the chosen ones; these, as he chose them in him, he put them into his hands, not only as his property, but for their safety; and here they are safe, for none can pluck them out of his hands; hence they are called "the sheep of his hand", not only because they are guided by his hand as a flock, but because they are under his care and custody; they were not only given him as his portion and inheritance, but to be kept and saved by him; when they were committed to him, he had this charge given to him by his Father, that "of all" that he had "given" him he "should lose nothing", not anyone of them; they were told into his hands, and the full tale of them was expected to be returned: and which respects the whole of them, as their souls which he has redeemed, and does preserve, so their bodies likewise; for the injunction was that he "should lose nothing", no part of them, not even their dust in their graves, "but should raise it up again at the last day", (John 6:39) as he will. God not only made a reserve of them in Christ for himself, but they were preserved in him, and therefore are called the "preserved of Israel", (Jude 1:1; Isa. 49:6) and that Christ, in a covenant way, by his own consent, was laid under such an obligation to keep and preserve the elect safe to glory, appears from his own account, both from what he says in his intercessory prayer; "those that thou gavest me, I have kept, and none of them is lost", (John 17:12) and from what he will say at the last day, when they are all brought in; "Behold, I, and the children which God hath given me", (Heb. 2:13) all kept safe, and presented faultless; the kingdom of priests, the whole number of the chosen vessels of salvation, will be delivered up complete and perfect, agreeable to the charge committed to him, and his own voluntary undertakings.

lb. Whereas these same Persons made his care and charge, would fall in Adam, with the rest of mankind, and that into a state of sin and misery, and under the curse and condemnation of the law, he proposed it to him, and enjoined it as his will, that he should redeem them from all this; and hence agreeing to it, he was sent to do it, and has done it; this work, as proposed and prescribed in the covenant of grace, is expressed by various phrases, in (Isa. 49:5, 6) as by "bringing Jacob again to him"; by Jacob is meant the elect of God, especially among the Jews, the remnant according to the election of grace: and "bringing" them "again", supposes they were gone aside, apostatized from God, and turned their backs on him, and were gone out of the right way, gone astray, and become lost sheep: and the work of Christ, as enjoined him in covenant, and he undertook, was to bring them unto God, and set them before him, to use Judah's words, when he offered to be surety for Benjamin, (Gen. 43:9) to bring them nigh to God; which he has done, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, (Eph. 2:13; 1 Peter 3:18) and also this

work of Christ is expressed by "raising up the tribes of Jacob"; meaning the same persons sunk into a low estate through the fall, into an horrible pit, into the mire and clay, into a pit wherein is no water: out of this low estate Christ was to raise them, as he did, by the blood of the covenant, and made them kings and priests unto God; and likewise by "restoring the preserved of Israel", even the same chosen ones, among the people of Israel; who, by the fall, lost their righteousness, and forfeited their happy life in innocence; these Christ was to recover from their fallen sinful estate, and restore them, as he has done, to a better righteousness, and to a life more abundant than what they lost, to an higher state of grace, glory, and happiness: and if this should be thought by Christ to be too "light" and too "low" a thing for him to be the Saviour of the elect among the Jews; it is farther proposed, that he should be "the light of the Gentiles", and "the salvation" of God "unto the end of the earth", be the Saviour of all God's elect, both among Jews and Gentiles; not only to die for his people among the Jews, but to bring again, raise up, restore, and gather together the children of God, scattered abroad throughout the whole world; and be the propitiation, not for the sins of the chosen among the Jews only, but of those in the whole world of the Gentiles; so that this takes in the whole work of redemption and salvation, the work which Christ's Father gave him to do, and which he undertook, and has finished, (John 17:4) and with respect to the Gentiles, as well as Jews, our Lord says, "Other sheep I have" to take care of, to lay down his life for, besides those among the Jews, "which are not of this fold", of the Jewish church state, but out of it; the Gentiles, them also I must bring, bring them again, raise up, and restore, and set before his Father; bring them into his church, and among his people, into an open state of grace, and to eternal glory; and this he says he must do, because his Father enjoined it, and he agreed to do it.

lc. In order to this, the Father proposed to the Son to assume human nature in the fulness of time, which was necessary to the work of redeeming the chosen people; as this was advised to in council, it was fixed in the covenant; "A body hast thou prepared me", (Heb. 10:5) not only in the purposes and decrees of God, in the book of which "all the members of it were written, which, in continuance, were fashioned, when, as yet, there was none of them", before they were in actual being, (Ps. 139:16) nor only in the prophesies of the Old Testament, in which it was foretold and promised, that the Messiah should become man, be the child born, and born of a virgin, and that the Man, the Branch, should grow up out of his place; but this was provided in covenant, not an human body only, nor an human soul only, but the whole human nature; which, though it had not a real and actual,

yet had a covenant subsistence, as it may be called; that is to say, the Father proposing it, and the Son assenting, as he did, by the above words; there was an agreement, a compact between them, that he should take into union with himself, a true body, and a reasonable soul; both which were necessary, to suffer the whole curse of the law; a true body, in which he might get his bread by the sweat of his brow, and suffer pains, sorrows, and death; bear the sins of many in it, and be offered up for them; and a reasonable soul, that he might endure the punishment of loss and sense; of loss, in being deprived for a while of the gracious presence of God, as when on the cross; of sense, in feeling the wrath poured into his soul, which made it exceeding sorrowful, as in the garden. And this nature proposed to be assumed, and was assumed, is of the same kind with that which sinned, and to which death was threatened, as it seems proper it should; the same flesh and blood with the children, and in which he was made like unto his brethren, excepting sin; and to assume such a nature was necessary, that Christ might have somewhat to offer, that would be acceptable to God, and satisfactory to his justice; this was part of the will of God enjoined in covenant, and which Christ agreed to do; that whereas ceremonial sacrifices would be disapproved of by him, as insufficient to take away sin, he would assume the body, or human nature, prepared and provided in covenant for him, and offer it up, that sin might be condemned, and the righteousness of the law be fulfilled; for it is "by this will", or the doing of it, that "we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all", (Heb. 10:5-10) and this being the will of the Father, what he proposed and prescribed to be done; hence he is always represented as concerned in this affair: he promised to bring forth his Servant the Branch, the Man the Branch, that should grow out of its place; and he sent his Son, in the fulness of time, made of a woman, and in the likeness of sinful flesh, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself (Zech. 3:8, 6:12; Rom. 8:3; Gal. 4:4).
l d. Another branch of the work assigned to Christ, in the covenant, by his Father, and to which he agreed, was to obey the law in the room and stead of his people; to which Christ has respect when he says, "thy law is within my heart", or I am heartily willing and ready to obey and fulfil it; and which designs not only the law of mediation, or the command enjoined Christ as Mediator, with respect to the performance of his several offices as such: so with respect to his prophetic office Christ says, "The Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak-whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (John 12:49, 50). And with respect to his priestly office, his laying down his life for his people; "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again; this commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:18,

14:31). And with respect to his Kingly office; "I will declare the decree"; that is, of his Father, the ordinance, statute, law, and rule of governing his people; for this refers not to what follows concerning the generation of Christ, but to what goes before, concerning his Kingly office: but also the moral law, which he agreed to be made under, and was willing to fulfil, and for which he came into the world, and did become the fulfilling end of it, whereby he magnified it, and made it honourable; as it became him to do, as the Surety of his people, and which was necessary to their justification; for "by the obedience of One, many are made righteous" (Rom. 5:19). le. Another part of the work proposed to him, and enjoined him by his Father, was to suffer the penalty of the law, death; which must be endured, either by the sinner himself, the transgressor of the law, or by his Surety, (Gen. 2:17) wherefore it became the wise, holy, and righteous Being, "for whom, and by whom, are all things - to make the Captain of salvation", his Son, whom he appointed to be the Saviour of men, perfect through sufferings, for the satisfaction of law and justice; and therefore he enjoined him to bear them, (Heb. 2:10) hence Christ says, speaking of laying down his life for the sheep, "This commandment have I received of my Father", (John 10:18) and hence his sufferings are called, "the cup" which his Father had given him; not just then put into his hands, for he spake of it long before, as what he was to drink of; but was what was ordered him in the everlasting covenant, (John 18:11; Matthew 20:22) and hence also they are spoken of by all the prophets from the beginning of the world: and this being the Father's will in covenant, hence likewise it is that the Father had so great an hand in them, as to bruise him and put him to grief, to awake the sword of justice against him, and smite him; not to spare him, but deliver him up by his determinate counsel, into the hands of wicked men, and to death itself; and the covenant having somewhat of the nature of a testament, or of a man's last will, there was a necessity of the death of the testator to ratify and confirm it; which was to be done by the blood of Christ, called therefore, the blood of the everlasting covenant (Heb. 9:15-17, 13:20). l f. When the Father signified in covenant, his dislike of the continuance of legal sacrifices, as insufficient to take away sin; he strongly suggested it was his will that his Son should become a sacrifice for it, and therefore prepared him a body, or human nature, in the covenant, capable of being offered up; and it was by his will expressed therein, that his covenant people are sanctified through the offering up of the body of Christ (Heb. 10:5-10). This is the great condition of the covenant, and on which all the blessings of it depend: "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin", or rather, "When his soul shall make an offering for sin"; that is, when he shall heartily and willingly offer up himself, soul and body, a sacrifice for sin, then the benefits following should

be conferred both on Christ, and on his spiritual seed (Isa. 53:10-12). And, lg. Farther, it was the will of the Father, in the covenant, that Christ should hereby make atonement for the sins of the chosen ones; this was the work which was assigned him in covenant, and is marked out in prophecy for him to do; namely, "To finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity", (Dan. 9:24) and as he agreed to do it, for this purpose he became man, and by his bloodshed, sufferings, and death, has made it; which lays a foundation of solid joy in his people, (Heb. 2:17, 9:26, 10:14; Rom. 5:10, 11).

lh. In close connection with the former, his work assigned him in covenant was, to bring in everlasting righteousness, for the justification of the elect. God the Father in covenant, "called him in righteousness", or "to righteousness", to work out a righteousness for his people, commensurate to the demands of law and justice; and this call and proposal he answered and agreed to; hence the church of old could say, "Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength"; and by virtue of the surety-ship righteousness of Christ, and his engagements in covenant, all the Old Testament saints were justified, (Isa. 42:6, 45:24, 25).

li. Lastly, The work which the Father proposed to, and prescribed to the Son was, "to feed the flock of slaughter"; to which he replied, "I will feed the flock of slaughter"; even all the elect of God, (Zech. 11:4, 7) and this feeding the flock committed to his charge, takes in his whole work as a shepherd; taking care of his sheep, laying down his life for them, gathering the lambs in his arms, carrying them in his bosom, gently leading those with young, protecting them from all harms and enemies, bringing them into his fold here and above, setting them at his right hand, and introducing them into his kingdom and glory. This is the work that was before him; and his reward was with him, next to be observed (Isa. 40:10, 11). 2. Secondly, On condition of Christ's engaging to do the above work proposed and prescribed to him, the Father promised in the covenant many things; some to him personally, and others to the elect, whom he represented and represented in it.

2a. Some things to himself, respecting his work, assistance in it, &c. A glory on the nature in which he should do it, the honourable offices he should be invested with in it, and the numerous offspring he should have.

2a 1. As the work assigned him was to be done in human nature, which needed qualifications for it, strength to do it, help and assistance in it, support under it, preservation from enemies, and encouragement of success: all this was promised him, that as his human nature should be formed by the Holy Ghost without sin, so it should be filled with his gifts and graces; that the Spirit should be put upon him, and rest on him, as a Spirit of wisdom,

counsel, might, knowledge, and of the fear of God, whereby he would be qualified to execute his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, (Isa. 11:1, 2, 42:1, 61:1) and which was bestowed upon him without measure, (Ps. 45:7; John 3:34) and that whereas the human nature, in which this work was to be done, would be attended with weakness, with all the sinless infirmities of human nature, as it was at last crucified through weakness; God promised to strengthen him, and he believed he would be his strength, and, accordingly, he was the Man of his right hand, whom he made strong for himself, (Ps. 89:21; Isa. 49:5; Ps. 80:17) and that, as he would need help and assistance in that nature, it was promised him, and he expected it, asked for it, and had it, (Ps. 22:1, 19; Isa. 50:7, 8, 49:8) and as it would want support, under the mighty load of sin, and sense of wrath, that it might not sink under it, this was promised and granted; so that he failed not, nor was he discouraged or broken, (Isa. 42:1, 4) and as it would have many enemies, who would seek to take its life away before its time; God promised that he would keep and preserve him, and hide him in the shadow of his hand, and in his quiver, and so secure him, as he did from Herod, and the wicked Jews, (Isa. 42:6, 49:2, 6) and since he would be treated with great contempt in that nature, be despised by men, abhorred by the nation of the Jews, and be a servant of rulers; he was told, for his encouragement, that the Lord would choose him, and express delight and pleasure in him as his elect: and though disallowed of men, would be chosen of God, and precious, (Isa. 42:1, 49:7) and accordingly, delight and well pleasedness in him were expressed by his Father, when both obeying and suffering, (Matthew 3:17; John 10:17) yea, success in his work was promised him, that "the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand"; that is, the work of the Lord be succeeded, which it was his will and pleasure to put into his hand. Now all this was promised him in covenant, as an encouragement to engage in this work. 2a2. As he was to do and suffer much in his human nature, so it was promised him, that he should have a very great glory conferred on him in that nature; not only that the glory of his Deity should be manifested and displayed, which was hid, especially from many, during his state of humiliation; for which, when he had done his work, he may be thought to pray, pleading a promise made to him, (John 17:4, 5). But there was a glory to be put on his human nature, which was promised in the everlasting covenant, and which he had with his Father, in promise, before the world was; hence the prophesies of the Old Testament, which are founded on covenant engagements, speak, as of the sufferings of Christ, so of the glory that should follow, and of Christ's entering through sorrows and sufferings, into his kingdom and glory; and Christ believed and expected that he should be "glorious", notwithstanding all his meanness in a

state of humiliation, (Isa. 49:5; Luke 24:26) particularly it was promised him, that though he should die and be laid in the grave, yet that he should not lie so long as to see corruption, but be raised again the third day, as he was, and so had the glory given him, and which he had faith and hope of, (Ps. 16:9-11; 1 Peter 1:21) as also, that he should ascend to heaven, and receive gifts for men, or in man, in human nature; and accordingly he did ascend above all heavens, to fill all things, and gave the gifts to men he received, and that in a very extraordinary manner; whereby it appeared he was glorified, as was promised him, because the Spirit was not given in such a plentiful manner till Jesus was glorified, exalted at the right hand of God, and made and declared Lord and Christ (Ps. 68:18; Eph. 4:8-10; John 7:39; Acts 2:32, 36). Moreover, it was promised him, that in human nature he should sit at the right hand of God; a glory and honour which none of the angels was ever admitted to; but, in consideration of his obedience, sufferings, and death, he was highly exalted, as it was promised he should, and a name given him above every name; being placed on the right hand of God, angels, authorities, and powers being made subject unto him! (Ps. 110:1; Heb. 1:13; Phil. 2:7-9; 1 Peter 3:22) and now he is seen crowned with glory and honour, and will come a second time in his own glory, and in his Father's glory, and in the glory of the holy angels, all according to the covenant agreement. In a word, it was promised him in covenant: on condition of making his soul an offering for sin, among other things, that God would "divide him a portion with the great"; give him as large and ample a portion, yea, a larger one, than any of the great men of the earth: that he would make him his firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth: and that he should "divide the spoil with the strong", or take the prey out of the hands of the mighty, and deliver the lawful captive; which spoil and prey being taken out of the hands of the strong, should be his portion and inheritance; and that because he poured out his soul unto death, was numbered with the transgressors, and bore the sins of many (Isa. 53:12). 2a3. As an encouragement to Christ to engage in the above work proposed to him in covenant, it was promised him, that he should be invested with, and sustain several honourable offices, which he should execute in human nature; as, that he should be the great Prophet of the church; not only "the minister of the circumcision for the truth of God" to the Jews, but be "for a light of the Gentiles"; which is twice promised, where plain traces of this everlasting covenant are to be seen, (Isa. 42:6, 49:6) and he accordingly was expected to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as to be the glory of the people of Israel, (Luke 2:32) and he was so, by the ministry of his apostles, in the Gentile world, and still is, by the preaching of his ministers in it; whereby men are turned from darkness to light, and to

show forth the praises of him who has called them out of the one to the other (1 Peter 2:9; Eph. 2:17; Acts 26:18). It was also promised, and swore to by an oath in covenant, that he should be a Priest; an honour which no man takes to himself, but he that is called to it, as was Aaron; even Christ glorified not himself, to be called an High Priest; but his Father, who invested him with this office, by an oath, to show the immutability of it; and that he should continue in it, and be a priest on his throne (Ps. 110:4; Heb. 5:4, 5, 7:21; Zech. 6:13). Likewise, that he should be King of Zion, of saints, over his church and people, and have a kingdom very large, from sea to sea, from the river to the ends of the earth; of which government, and the increase of it, there should be no end; a dispensatory kingdom, besides that of nature and providence, which he had a right to, as a divine Person; but this is a kingdom disposed of to him in covenant and by promise; "I appoint unto you a kingdom", says Christ, "as my Father hath appointed me", חסנסס, has disposed of or appointed in covenant to me (Luke 22:29). Once more, God has appointed him in covenant to be the judge of quick and dead; and has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom he has ordained; and accordingly, he has committed all judgment to him, that all men should honour him as they honour the Father, (Acts 10:42; 17:31; John 5:22, 23). 2a4. In consequence of fulfilling the condition of the covenant, engaging to do, and doing the above work proposed in it; it was promised to Christ, that he should "see his seed, and prolong his days", (Isa. 53:10) that is, that he should have a spiritual offspring, a seed that should serve him, and be accounted to him for a generation; that he should be an everlasting Father to them, and they be his everlasting children; that as the first Adam was the common parent, and federal head of all his posterity, who sinning, conveyed sin and death to them; so the second Adam becomes the Father and federal Head of a spiritual offspring, and conveys grace, righteousness, and life unto them: it was promised him, that this seed of his should be numerous, and continue long; yea, that these children should endure for ever, and his throne be as the days of heaven; and that these should be his portion, and his inheritance; not only the elect among the Jews, but those among the Gentiles also; and therefore he was bid to ask of his Father in covenant, and he would "give" him "the heathen for his inheritance", and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; which accordingly he asked, and has, and is well pleased with his portion, and says, the lines are fallen to him in pleasant places, and he has a goodly heritage, (Isa. 9:6; Ps. 22:30, 89:29, 36, 2:8, 16:6) yea, it was promised him, that all persons and things should be put into his hands, to subserve his mediatorial interest, and the good of his spiritual seed, his covenant people; even all the

wicked of the earth, whom he disposes of as he pleases, and rules with a rod of iron: he is given to be an Head over all things to the church; for its preservation and security; and has power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him; and accordingly all things are put into his hand, and all creatures are at his dispose; all power in heaven and in earth is given unto him, so that he can order and appoint whatsoever he pleases for the good of his people (Ps. 2:9; Eph. 1:22; John 17:2, 3:35; Matthew 28:18).

2b. There are other things which God the Father promised in covenant, respecting the elect, the persons for whom Christ was a covenantee, and whom he represented in the covenant, and for whose sake he was to do all the work proposed to him, and which he undertook. And,

2bl. It was promised, that upon Christ's engaging in, and performing the work of redemption, they should be delivered out of that state of misery sin brought them into, even out of the pit wherein is no water, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, (Zech. 9:11) that they should be redeemed from all their iniquities, original and actual, which should be cast behind God's back, and into the depths of the sea, never to be seen and remembered more to their condemnation, (Ps. 130:8) that they should be ransomed from the hand of Satan, stronger than they, and the prey be taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered, (Jer. 31:11; Isa. 49:24, 25) that they should be freed from the law, its curse and condemnation, Christ being made a curse for them, and sin condemned in his flesh, (Rom. 8:1, 3, 33; Gal. 3:13) and that they should be secured from hell, wrath, ruin, and everlasting destruction their sins deserved (Job 33:24).

2b2. That upon the faithful discharge of his office, as a Servant, particularly in bearing the sins of his people, they should be openly justified and acquitted; that his righteousness he would bring in, should be made known unto them, and received by faith; and so they should be manifestatively, and in their own consciences, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (Isa. 53:11; 1 Cor. 6:11; Ezek. 36:25).

2b3. That all their iniquities should be forgiven them, for Christ's sake, and their sins and transgressions be remembered no more. This is a special and particular article in the covenant, to which all the prophets bear witness (Jer. 31:34; Acts 10:43).

2b4. That they should be openly adopted, and declared the children of God, and be dealt with as such; that God should be their God, their Father, their Portion, and Inheritance; and they should be his people, his children, and heirs of him, and be treated as such by him; as they would be when chastised for their sins, the rod being provided for them in covenant, as well

as their inheritance (Jer. 32:38; 2 Cor. 6:18; Ps. 89:30, 34; Heb. 12:7).

2b5. That they should be regenerated, their hearts spiritually circumcised to love the Lord, and his fear put into them, and be made willing in the day of his power upon them, to be saved by him, and to serve him, (De 30:6; Jer. 32:39; Ps. 110:3) that they should be made new creatures, have new hearts and new spirits put within them, in which are new principles of light, life, and love, grace and holiness, joy, peace, and comfort; that the stony heart should he taken out of them, the hardness and impenitence of it removed, and an heart of flesh given them, soft, penitent, and contrite; or, in other words, that true, spiritual, evangelical repentance for sin should be granted to them (Ezek. 36:26).

2b6. That they should have knowledge of God, as their covenant God and Father; even the least, as well as the greatest, be all taught of God, as his children, and so believe in Christ; for those that hear and learn of the Father, come to Christ; that is, believe in him (Jer. 31:34; Isa. 54:13; John 6:45). So that repentance and faith are not terms and conditions of the covenant, but are free grace gifts granted, and blessings of grace promised in the covenant, and are as sure to the covenant people, as any other blessings whatever, (Acts 11:18; 5:31; Eph. 2:8).

2b7. It is another promise in this covenant, that the law of God should be put into their inward parts, and written on their hearts; that they should have a spiritual knowledge of it, and a cordial respect unto it, a real delight in it, and serve it with their minds and spirits, and yield a constant, ready, and cheerful obedience to it, (Jer. 31:33; Rom. 7:22, 25) as well as by the epistles of Christ, and have the law of faith, or doctrine of the gospel, take place in their hearts, and dwell richly in them, and they yield a professed subjection to it.

2b8. It is further promised by the Lord, in this covenant, that whereas they are weak and strengthless, and unable to do any thing spiritually good of themselves, that he will put his Spirit within them, who should work in them both to will and to do; and strengthen them with strength in the inward man, and enable them to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments, and do them, (Ezek. 36:27) so that likewise new spiritual and evangelical obedience, both to law and gospel, is no term and condition of the covenant, but a blessing secured in it, which absolutely provides with grace and strength to perform it. 2b9. Another article in this covenant, respecting the chosen and covenant people, is, that they shall persevere in grace, in faith, and holiness, to the end; this is absolutely promised in it, and the faithfulness of God is engaged to perform it; "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me" (Jer. 31:40; 1 Thess. 5:23, 24). 2bl0. Glory, as well as grace,

is promised in this covenant; and to whom God gives the one, he gives the other; eternal life was promised before the world began; and the promise of it was made unto Christ in the everlasting covenant, and put into his hands for his people; and it is represented as if it was the only promise in it, being the grand, principal, and comprehensive one; "This is the promise that he has promised us, even eternal life", (Titus 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:1; 1 John 2:25) hence our Lord, in an authoritative way, as it were, demands the glorification of ALL the Lather has given him, and he undertook for in covenant, (John 17:24).

Chapter 9

OF THE PART THE SON OF GOD, THE SECOND PERSON, HAS TAKEN IN THE COVENANT.

The part which the Son of God takes, and the place and office he has in the covenant of grace, are next to be considered. Christ has so great a concern in the covenant, that he is said to be the Covenant itself; "I will give thee for a Covenant of the people", (Isa. 42:6, 49:8) his work, that which was proposed to him, and he agreed to do, is, as has been observed, the grand condition of the covenant, and he himself is the great blessing of it; he is the Alpha and the Omega, as of the scriptures, so of the covenant of grace; he is the first and the last in it, the sum and substance of it; he is everything, ALL in ALL in it; all the blessings of it are the sure mercies of him, who is David, and David's Son; he is prevented with all the blessings of goodness, and the covenant people are blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, as their covenant head; all the promises are made to him, and are all yea and amen in him; he sustains various characters and offices in the covenant. He is the representative Head of his people in it; he is the Mediator, Surety, Testator, and Messenger of it; of all which, more particularly and distinctly hereafter. At present I shall only observe Christ's assent to his Father's proposals, his acceptance of them, and open declaration of his readiness and willingness to act according to them, which formally constitute the covenant and compact between them; his consent thereunto is fully expressed in Psalm 40:6-8. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering, and sin offering, hast thou not required. Then said I Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God! yea, thy law is within my heart". Which words, though spoken and written by David, yet as representing the Messiah, as is certain from the application of them to him by the apostle, in (Heb. 10:5-10) according to whom, the time when these words were spoken, was when "he cometh into the world", that is, at his incarnation, when he came from heaven to earth,

by the assumption of human nature, to do the will and work of his Father, which he proposed unto him; then he said all the above in fact, what he had before said in word, in promise; "Lo, I come to do thy will"; for that this was said before is plain, since it was known to David, in his time, and written by him, as the penman of the Holy Ghost, and as representing Christ, and was repeated and confirmed by Christ at his coming into the world: and when could it be said before, but in the covenant of grace? Likewise it appears, that this was said on the account of the insufficiency of legal sacrifices to atone for sin; in proof of which the apostle quotes the words, "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin"; wherefore-he saith, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not", &c. That is, though they were the institutions and appointment of God, yet he would not have them continued any longer than the coming of Christ, because of the weakness and unprofitableness of them to take away sin, and because they were to have, and had, their accomplishment in him; in the fore views of which this was said in David's time, and earlier by Christ, in the covenant of grace; in which, knowing his Father's will concerning sacrifices, and their continuance, as well as the insufficiency of them, freely declared that he was ready to come, in the fulness of time, and give himself an offering for sin; as his Father had proposed to him he should (Isa. 53:10). This assent and consent of his is first more obscurely and figuratively expressed; "Mine ears hast thou opened", digged or bored; expressive of his great attention, hearkening and listening with great diligence, to what his Father proposed to him; see (Isa. 50:4, 5) and of his ready and cheerful obedience to his Father's will, signified thereby: the phrase seems to be used in allusion to the boring the servant's ear, who cared not to quit his master's house, but was willing to serve him for ever, (Ex. 21:5, 6) the Septuagint, and so the apostle render the words, "A body hast thou prepared me"; a part being put for the whole; and which is supposed; for the ear could not be opened, unless a body was prepared; by which is meant, not a part, but the whole of the human nature, soul and body; prepared, not only in the purposes and decrees of God, but in the covenant of grace, where it had a covenant subsistence, by the joint agreement of the divine Persons; for as the Father proposed it to the Son, that he should have such a nature, he agreed to assume it, and therefore takes up these words, to show his ready assent to it; "A body hast thou prepared me"; as it is thy pleasure I should have one, I am ready to take it, at a proper time; that I might have something to offer, an offering of more avail, and more acceptable, than the legal ones. This acceptance of his Father's proposals is more clearly and fully expressed; "Lo, I come to do thy will"; that is, to assume human nature, to lay down his life in it, to suffer death, make atonement for the sins of his

people, and obtain their redemption and salvation: his willingness to do all this freely, and without compulsion; he himself, and not another, and immediately, as soon as ever it should be necessary; he declares, with a note of admiration, attention, and asseveration; and his heartiness in it is still more fully signified, by saying, "I delight to do thy will"; it was with the utmost pleasure and complacency that be complied with it, and it would be his meat and drink, as it was, to do it: and it is added; "Yea, thy law is within my heart"; it is in my heart to fulfil it; I am ready to yield a cordial and cheerful obedience to it. Now all this was "written" concerning him "in the volume of the book"; not of the scriptures in general only, nor of the Pentateuch in particular, the only volume extant in David's time, sv סֵ֫שׁאפצסכ, at the head and beginning of which is a declaration of the grace, will, and work of Christ, (Gen. 3:15) nor only of the book of God's purposes, (Ps. 139:16) but of the covenant; alluding to the writing, signing, and sealing of covenants; the covenant at Sinai is called, the book of the covenant (Ex. 24:8). Now in this volume, or book, as the Father's proposal is there written and contained, so is the Son's assent unto it, and acceptance of it. Add to all this, that the Character in which Christ here addresses his divine Father, "My God", is a phrase expressive of covenant relation, and is frequently so used both with regard to Christ and his people. But, to observe no more, nothing more fully proves Christ's free and full assent and consent to do the will of his Father, proposed in covenant, than his actual performance of it. Was it his will that he should take the care and charge of all his elect, and lose none? He has done it (John 17:12). Was it his will that he should assume human nature? The Word has been made flesh, and dwelt among men (John 1:14). Was it his will that he should obey the law? He is become the end of the law for righteousness (Rom. 10:4). Was it his will that he should suffer death, the penalty of it? He has suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring them to God (1 Peter 3:18). Was it his will that he should make himself an offering for sin? He has given himself to God, an Offering and a Sacrifice, of a sweet smelling savour (Eph. 5:2). In a word, Was it his will that he should redeem his people from all their iniquities? Yes, he has obtained an eternal redemption of them (Heb. 9:12).

Chapter 10

OF CHRIST, AS THE COVENANT HEAD OF THE ELECT

There are various characters, relations, and offices, which Christ sustains in the covenant of grace; among which, that of a federal Head is one: Christ is often said to be the "Head of the Church"; not of any particular congregation of saints, in this or the other part of the world; but of the church of the

firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, even of all the elect of God, that..... ever have been, are, or will be in the world, (Eph. 1:22, 23, 5:23; Col. 1:18) and he is a Head to them in different senses; he is that to them as a natural head is to a natural body, and the members of it; which is if the same nature with it, superior to it, communicates life, sense, and motion to it, as well as overlooks and protects it; such an Head of influence is Christ to the church, the source of life to it, from whom nourishment is derived, and all the supplies of grace, (Eph. 4:15, 16; Col. 2:19). He is an Head in a political sense, as a captain general is head of his army, and a king is head of his subjects, (Judg. 10:18, 11:11; Hosea 1:11) and in an economical sense, as the husband is the head of the wife, and a father the head of his children, and a master the head of his servants and of his whole family (Num. 1:4; Eph. 5:23, 24; Isa. 9:6; Matthew 23:10). The headship of Christ in these several senses, chiefly belongs to his Kingly office; but besides these, he is the representative head of his church, or of all the elect of God; they were all considered in him, and represented by him, when he covenanted with his Father for them; all that he engaged to do and suffer, was not only on their account, but in their name and stead; and all that he received, promises and blessings, were not only for them, but he received them as representing them. As Christ was given to be the covenant of the people, so to be an Head of them in it (Eph. 1:22). And thus, 1.

1. Christ was considered in election; he was chosen as Head, and his people as members in him, and so they had union to him, and a representative being in him before the world began; they did not then personally exist, but Christ did, who represented them, and therefore were capable of being chosen in him, as they were (Eph. 1:4).

2. Such a relation Christ stood in to them in the covenant, that was made, not with him alone, but with all the elect of God, considered in him as their head and representative; hence we read of "the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ"; which was of God made sure and firm with his covenant people, in Christ, as their Head, before the foundation of the world; when as yet they had not an actual being, only a representative one in Christ, (Gal. 3:17) and hence the covenant was made sure to them in him, before the manifestation and application of it to Abraham, and his spiritual seed spoken of in the preceding verse; so that "the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after" that revelation and manifestation of the covenant to Abraham, "cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect"; for what commences in time, can never make void what was confirmed in eternity.

3. The promises of grace and glory, made to the elect of God in covenant,

were made to them, as considered in Christ, their head and representative; for whereas these promises were made before the world began, (Titus 1:2) they could not be made to them in their own persons, but as represented by Christ, and therefore were made to him their Head, and to them in him; and hence the promise of life is said to be "in" him, (2 Tim. 1:1) and indeed, all the promises are Yea and Amen "in him" (2 Cor. 1:20). The apostle having said, that "to Abraham and his seed were the promises made", observes, "he saith not" and "to seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ"; who is the head and representative of all his spiritual offspring, and in whom they are all collected and considered; all the promises made, manifested, and applied to Abraham, and his spiritual seed, were originally made to Christ, the everlasting Father of his spiritual offspring, the common Head and Parent of them (Gal. 3:16).

4. All the blessings of grace, and grants of them in the covenant of grace, given and made to the elect in it, were given and made to Christ first in their name, and as representing them, and to them in him, as considered in him, their head and representative; for when these grants were made, and blessings bestowed, they were not in actual being, only had a representative one in Christ their head; hence grace is said to be given them "in Christ Jesus", before the world began; and they to be blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places "in Christ", as they were chosen in him before the formation of the world (2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:3, 4).

5. Christ, in the everlasting covenant, engaged in the name of his people, to obey and suffer in their stead; and accordingly he did both in time, as their Head and Representative. He obeyed the law, and fulfilled all righteousness, not as a single individual of human nature, and for himself, but as the federal Head of his people, as representing them; "That so the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us", says the apostle, (Rom. 8:4) that is, in the elect of God, they being considered in Christ their Head, when he became the fulfilling End of the law for righteousness unto them; and so they were made, or accounted, the righteousness of God "in him" their Head, (Rom. 10:4; 2 Cor. 5:21) in like manner as he in their name engaged to suffer for them; so in time he suffered in their room and stead, as their head and representative; insomuch that they may be truly said to suffer with him; they were all gathered together, recollected in one Head, "in Christ", and sustained and represented by him when he hung upon the cross, and are said to be "crucified with" him (Eph. 1:10; Col. 2:12).

6. In consequence of Christ's covenant engagements and performances, when he rose from the dead, he rose not as a private Person, but as a public Person, as the head and representative of all those for whom he obeyed and

suffered; and therefore they are said to be quickened and raised together with him, as they were then also justified in him, when he himself, as their Head and Surety was (Eph. 2:5, 6; Col. 3:1; 1 Tim. 3:16). Yea, Christ is also gone to heaven, not only as the Forerunner of his people, but as their Head and Representative; he has taken possession of heaven in their name, appears in the presence of God for them, and represents them, as the high priest did the children of Israel, in the holy of holies; and hence they are said to be made to sit together in heavenly places "in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6).

7. The federal headship of Christ, may be argued and concluded from Adam being a federal head and representative of all his natural offspring; in which he was "the figure of him that was to come", that is, Christ; for it was in that chiefly, if not solely, that he was a figure of Christ; at least, that is the chief, if not the only thing the apostle has in view, (Rom. 5:14) as appears by his running the parallel between them, as heads and representatives of their respective offspring: Adam, through his fall, conveying sin and death to all his natural descendants; and Christ, through the free gift of himself, communicating grace, righteousness, and life to all his spiritual seed, the elect, the children his Father gave him: and hence these two are spoken of as the first and last Adam, and the first and second man; as if they were the only two men in the world, being the representatives of each of their seeds, which are included in them (1 Cor. 15:45, 47).

Now, as Christ stands in the relation of an Head to the elect, he has all things delivered into his hands; in honour to him, and in love both to him and them, and for their good; God has given him to be "Head over all things" to the church, (Matthew 11:27; John 3:35; Eph. 1:22) all persons and things are under his command, and at his dispose, to subserve his interest as Head of the church; even angels and men, good and bad, and all things in heaven and in earth; all power therein to protect and defend his people, and to provide for them; all fulness of grace, and the blessings of it to supply them; the government of the church, and of the world, is on his shoulders, who represents them; and therefore their persons, grace, and glory, must be safe in him; the covenant, and all its blessings and promises, are sure in him, the Head and Representative of his people in it.

Chapter 11

OF CHRIST, THE MEDIATOR OF THE COVENANT

Another relation, or office, which Christ bears in the covenant, is that of Mediator; three times in the epistle to the Hebrews is he called the Mediator of the new, or better covenant or testament, (Heb. 8:6, 9:15, 12:24) the same with the everlasting covenant, only so called in reference

to a former administration of it. The apostle Paul asserts, that there is "one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). Both Jews and Gentiles have a notion of a Mediator; the Jews call the Messiah כסספכ, the Mediator, or middle one; and so Philo the Jew, speaks of the most ancient Word of God, as πσοο, a middle Person between God and men, not unbegotten as God, nor begotten as man, but the middle of the extremes, one between both. The Persians call their God Mithras, לרעאסם, a Mediator; and the Demons, with the heathens, seem to be, according to them, mediators between the superior gods and men; but we have a more sure word of prophecy to direct us in this matter; Christ is the one and only Mediator. It will be proper to enquire,

1. First, In what sense Christ is the mediator of the covenant; not as Moses, who stood between God and the people of Israel, "to show" them "the word of the Lord", (Deut. 5:5) to receive the law, the lively oracles, and deliver them to them, said to be ordained, or disposed by angels, in the hand of a mediator, supposed to be Moses (Gal. 3:19). Christ indeed is the revealer and declarer of his Father's mind and will, and the dispenser of the covenant of grace in the different administrations of it, in each of the periods of time; but this more properly belongs to him as the "angel" or "messenger of the covenant", as he is called, (Mai. 3:1) than the mediator of it. Christ is a mediator of reconciliation; such an one as interposes between two parties at variance, in order to bring them together, and in some way or other reconcile them to each other. "A mediator is not of one", of one party; for where there is but one party there can be no difference, and so no need of a mediator; but "God is one", he is one party, the offended party, and man is the other, the offending party; and Christ is the mediator between them both to bring them together, who are through sin at as great distance as earth and heaven; and he is the antitype of Jacob's ladder, that reaches both and joins them together; the days-man between them, who lays his hand on them both, and makes peace between them; and so a learned Grecian interprets the word for "mediator" eipr|vo rcoioc;, "a peacemaker"; and this work he performs not merely by way of intreaty, as one man may intreat another to lay aside his resentment against an offender, and not pursue him to his destruction, which lies in his power; or as Moses intreated God with great vehemence and importunity to forgive the Israelites, or blot him out of his book; for however commendable this may be for one man to intercede with another, or with God for an offender, in such a manner; yet it seems too low and mean an office for Christ the Son of God, barely to intreat his Father to lay aside the marks of his displeasure against a sinner, and not so honourable for God to grant it, without satisfaction; wherefore Christ acts

the part of a mediator, by proposing to his Father to make satisfaction for the offence committed, and so appease injured justice. Christ is a mediator of reconciliation in a way of satisfaction; reconciliation in this way is Christ's great work as mediator; this is what was proposed in covenant, and what he therein agreed to do, and therefore is called the mediator of the covenant.

Reconciliation supposes a former state of friendship, a breach of that friendship, and a renewal of it; or a bringing into open friendship again. Man in a state of innocence was in a state of friendship with God, had many high honours and special favours conferred upon him; being made after the image and likeness of God, had all the creatures put in subjection to him, was placed in a delightful garden, had a right to eat of the fruit of all the trees in it but one; to him the creatures were brought to give them names, and an help meet was provided for him; but man being in this honour abode not long, sin soon separated chief friends, and he was drove out of his paradisaical Eden; and appeared to be, as all his posterity are, not only at a distance from God, and alienation to him, but enmity against him, as the carnal mind of man is; and in this state the elect of God were considered, when Christ undertook in covenant to be the mediator of reconciliation for them; and in this condition he found them, when he came to make actual reconciliation for them; "you that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled", (Col. 1:21) and hereby has brought them into an open state of grace and favour with God; into greater nearness to him, and into a more exalted state of friendship with him than was lost by the fall.

It should be observed, that the elect of God are considered in the covenant of grace as fallen creatures; and that Christ being a mediator of reconciliation and satisfaction for them, supposes them such. In the covenant of works there was no mediator; while that covenant remained unbroken, and man continued in a state of integrity, he needed none; he could correspond and converse with God without one; though he might have knowledge of Christ as the Son of God, and second person in the Trinity, which was necessary to his worship of him, yet he knew nothing of him as mediator, nor needed him as such; he could hear the voice of God, and abide in his presence without fear or shame; it was after he had sinned, and not before, that he hid himself among the trees, on hearing the voice of God: nor is there any mediator for angels, none was provided, nor admitted, for the fallen angels, they were not spared; and the good angels needed not any, having never sinned; they are admitted into the divine presence without a mediator to introduce them; they stand before God, and behold his face continually. Some have thought that Christ is the medium of union of angels with God, and of elect men, chosen in Christ, and considered as unfallen, which I will not object to; but a

mediator of reconciliation and satisfaction, Christ is only to fallen men, and they needed one; a reconciliation was necessary, and without such a mediator the purposes of God concerning elect men, the covenant of grace made on their account, the prophecies of the Old Testament, and the salvation of men could not have been accomplished; nor the perfections of God, particularly his justice and holiness, glorified in it.

Sin has been committed, which is offensive to God, provoking to the eyes of his glory, and deserving of his wrath, even of eternal death; the law broken, which reflects dishonour on the lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; justice injured and affronted, and which insisted on making a satisfaction, and that nothing less than perfect obedience to the law, and a bearing the penalty of it; fallen man could not make his peace with God, nor reconcile himself to him on such terms; Christ, as mediator of the covenant, undertook to make reconciliation for elect men; and God set him and sent him forth to be, and he is become the propitiation for their sins; and God is pacified towards them for all that they have done, and has taken away all his wrath, and turned himself from the fierceness of his anger, and removed all the visible marks and effects of his displeasure.

Nor reconciliation Christ is the mediator of, as thus stated, any contradiction to the everlasting love of God to his elect in Christ; where there is the strongest love among men, when an offence is committed, there is need of reconciliation to be made. David had the strongest affection for his son Absalom as can well be imagined; Absalom committed a very heinous offence, murdered his brother Amnon, David's firstborn, and heir to his crown; he fled from justice, and from his father's wrath and vengeance he might justly fear; Joab became a mediator between them, first more secretly, by means of the woman of Tekoah, and then more openly in his own person, and succeeded so far as to obtain leave that the young man be called from his exile; nevertheless, when returned, David would not admit him into his presence until two years after, when, and not before, a full and open reconciliation was made and declared; and yet all this while the heart of David was towards his son, and continued, even notwithstanding his unnatural rebellion against him. And so the love of God to his people is from everlasting to everlasting, invariably the same: with him there is no shadow of turning; there is no change in God, as not from love to hatred, so not from hatred to love; he is in one mind, and none can turn him, no, not Christ himself; nor was it the work of Christ's mediation, nor the design of it, to turn the heart of God; for that proceeded according to the unalterable and unchangeable will of God; nor did the mediation of Christ procure, nor was it intended to procure the love and favour of God to his elect; so far from

it, that itself is the fruit and effect of that love (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; 1 John 4:10). It was love that set forth and sent forth Christ to be the propitiation for sin; it was owing to the good will and free favour of God, that a Mediator was admitted for sinful men; and it appeared still greater, in providing one to be a Mediator of reconciliation for them; and the reconciliation the scriptures speak of, as made by the blood, sufferings, and death of Christ, is not a reconciliation of God to them, as to his love, but justice; but a reconciliation of them to God; and that not so much of their persons, which are always acceptable and well pleasing to God, as considered in Christ, in whom they were chosen, as for their sins, (Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:19; Col. 1:20, 21; Heb. 2:17) and which is no other than a satisfaction for them to divine justice; for the reconciliation of their persons in that way, is not to the love and affections of God, from which they were never separated, but to the justice of God, offended by their sins; and the whole is a reconciliation of the divine perfections to each other in the business of salvation; for though these agree among themselves, yet with respect to that, had different claims to make; the love and grace of God pleaded for mercy, and mercy pleaded for itself, that it might be shown to the objects of love; but justice insisted on it, that satisfaction be made for the offences committed; the difficulty was how to answer each of these pleas; Christ interposed, and offered himself in the covenant, to be a Mediator of reconciliation, or to make satisfaction for sin; and so mercy and truth have met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Reconciliation then is the principal branch of Christ's office in the covenant as Mediator. Another follows, namely,

His intercession, or advocacy, which proceeds upon reconciliation or satisfaction made; "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the Propitiation for our sins", (1 John 2:1, 2) and it is his being the Propitiation for sin, that is the foundation of his advocacy, or on which is grounded his plea for the remission of it; he is the Angel of God's presence, who always appears there for his people, and ever lives to make intercession for them; he is first the Mediator of reconciliation, and then of intercession; as they are reconciled to God by his sufferings and death, they are saved through his interceding life. He is called the Angel of God's presence, not only because he enjoys it himself; but because he introduces his people into it, and presents their petitions to God, offers up the prayers of all saints, perfumed with the much incense of his mediation; through which they become acceptable to God. Christ is the medium of access to God, to the throne of his grace; there is no drawing nigh of sinful men to God without a Mediator, without him he is a consuming fire; no man can come to the Father but by Christ; he is the only Way, the new and the

living Way; and through him, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, there is access with boldness and confidence. And he is the medium of acceptance, both of persons and services, which are only accepted in the Beloved, and become acceptable through his prevalent mediation and intercession; and he is the medium of conveyance of all the blessings of the covenant of grace to his people, which are all communicated in virtue of his advocacy for them; and he is the medium of the saints' communion and fellowship with God now, as he will be the medium of their glory and happiness to all eternity. The next thing to be considered is,

Secondly, The fitness of Christ for his work and office, as the Mediator of the covenant; since a mediator was necessary, and he must be one of the divine Persons in the Trinity; the Son of God being the middle Person in it, seems most proper and suitable to preserve the order, name, and place of the Persons in it: it does not seem so decent, that the first Person should be a Mediator to the second; but rather, since, as Dr. Goodwin expresses it, the suit of trespass was commenced, and ran in the name of the Father, of the first Person for the rest; it seems most agreeable that the reconciliation be made to him by one of the other Persons; and since the second Person bears the name of a Son, as the first of a Father, it seems most in character that the Son should mediate with the Father, than the Father with the Son; and since it was proper that the Mediator should become the Son of man, as will be seen hereafter, it seems most agreeable, that he who is the Son of God should become the Son of man; otherwise there would be two Sons in the Trinity, or two Persons so called: and for the first or third Person to become a Mediator between God and man, does not seem so becoming, as he who is the second or middle Person among them. But the principal fitness of Christ for his office, as Mediator, at least for the execution of it, lies in the union of the two natures, human and divine, in his one Person; whereby he is the Immanuel, God with us, God manifest in the flesh; and as he partakes of both natures, he has an interest in, and a concern for both; he is fit to be a Mediator between God and man; both to take care of things pertaining to God and his glory, and to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

I. It was requisite that he should be man, assume human nature into union with his divine Person, even a true body, and a reasonable soul.

1. That he might be related to those he was a Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour of; that he might be their brother, their near kinsman, their God, and so have an apparent right to redeem them, as the near kinsman, according to the law, had Leviticus 25:48, 49.

2. That sin might be satisfied for, and reconciliation be made for it, in the same nature which sinned; and whereas, according to the scheme of

mediation and salvation by Christ, the same individuals that sinned were not to suffer; it seems requisite and reasonable that an individual of that nature should, in their room and stead, that so it might come as near to what the law required as could be (Gen. 2:17).

3. It was proper that the Mediator should be capable of obeying the law, broken by the sin of man: as a divine Person could not be subject to the law, and yield obedience to it; and had he assumed the angelic nature, that would not have been capable of obeying all the precepts of the law, which are required of men; and universal perfect obedience was necessary for the justification of a sinner before God; hence Christ was made of a woman, that he might be made under the law, and yield obedience to it; by which obedience men are made righteous in the sight of God (Gal. 4:4; Rom. 5:19).

4. It was meet the Mediator should be man, that he might be capable of suffering death; as God he could not die, and had he assumed the nature of an angel, that is incapable of dying; and yet suffering the penalty of the law, death, was necessary to make reconciliation; a sacrifice for sin was to be offered, and therefore it was proper Christ should have somewhat to offer; even a true body, and a reasonable soul, Which he did offer; peace was to be made by blood, and reconciliation by the sufferings of death, and therefore a nature must be assumed capable of shedding blood, and of suffering death; and without which he could not be made sin, and a curse for men, as the law required he should. In a word, it was highly becoming, that the Captain of our salvation should be made perfect through suffering, that he might be a perfect Saviour, which could not be, without the assumption of human nature (see Heb. 2:10, 14, 15, 5:9, 8:3).

5. It was fit the Mediator should be man, that he might be a merciful, as well as a faithful High Priest, have a fellow feeling with his people, and sympathise with them under all their temptations, afflictions, and distresses, and succour and relieve them, from love and affection to them, as their friend and brother (Heb. 2:17, 18, 4:15).

6. It was necessary that he should be holy and righteous, free from all sin, original and actual, that he might offer himself without spot to God, take away the sins of men, and be an advocate for them, (Heb. 7:26, 9:14; 1 John 3:5 2:1) but it was not enough to be truly man, and an innocent person; he must be more than a man, to be a mediator between God and man; it was requisite, therefore,

2. That he should be God as well as man.

1. That he might be able to draw nigh to God, and treat with him about terms of peace, and covenant with him; all which a mere man could not do; and therefore it is with wonder said, and as expressive of the arduousness of

the task, of the difficulty of the work, and of the necessity of a divine Person to do it; "Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?" (Jer. 30:21) to mediate between him and sinful men, to lay his hands on both, and reconcile them together; none but Jehovah's fellow could or dared to do this.

2. That he might give virtue and value to his obedience and sufferings; for if he had been a mere man, his obedience and righteousness would not have been sufficient to justify men, nor his sufferings and death a proper sacrifice and atonement for sin. But being God as well as man, his righteousness is the righteousness of God; and so sufficient to justify all that believe in him, and them from all their sins; and his blood is the blood of the Son of God, and so cleanses from all sin, and is a proper atonement for it.

3. Being Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour, it naturally and necessarily leads men to put their trust and confidence in him, and rely upon him, for peace, pardon, and salvation; whereas, if he was a mere man, and not God, this would entail a curse upon them; "for cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm", (Jer. 17:5) and even to worship and adore him, and ascribe divine honour and glory to him; which to do would be idolatry, was he not God; for though he that is Mediator is to be worshipped by angels and men, yet not as mediator, but as God; for it is his Deity that is the foundation of worship, and renders him the proper object of it; God will "not give" his "glory to another", (Isa. 42:8) not even the glory of being a Mediator to any other but a divine Person; for of Christ, in his mediatorial capacity, are the words spoken, as appears from the whole preceding context: it is necessary that the Mediator should be God, that he might be the proper object of trust, worship, honour, and glory divine.

Nor is it any objection to his being a Mediator, as to his divine nature, that then the Father and the Spirit would be Mediators too, the divine nature being common to them all; since it is not in the divine nature, essentially considered, but as it subsists in the second Person, the Son of God, that Christ is Mediator, and performs his office; and to exercise this office in it, is no lessening and degrading of his Person, since it is a glory that none but a divine Person is fit to bear: and it may be observed, that among men this office is sometimes assumed and exercised by one superior to either of the parties between whom he mediates; and though the Father may be said to be greater than Christ, considered in his office capacity, yet this does not suppose any subjection and inferiority of his divine Person: nor is it any objection to Christ being Mediator, as to his divine nature, that then he must be a Mediator to himself, or reconcile men to himself; for not to observe, that Christ in his office may be distinguished from himself, as a divine Person;

as one may be distinguished from himself as to different circumstances of age, office, &c. There is no impropriety that Christ is a Mediator for himself, or has made reconciliation and satisfaction to himself; for if the Father may be said to reconcile men to himself by his Son, as in (2 Cor. 5:18, 19; Col. 1:20) why may not the Son be said to reconcile men to himself, as God, by his sufferings and death as man? There is no impropriety, that if a man has offended a society of men, one of that society should take upon him to be a mediator for him, and reconcile him to that society, though he himself is a part of it, and as such, equally offended as they: or, still nearer to the case in hand, supposing a rebellion in a nation, against the king of it, and this king should have a son, who is heir to his throne, and so must be equally offended with the rebels as his father, and yet should take upon him to be a mediator between his father and the rebels, and make peace between them; where would be the impropriety of it, though he himself, with his father, is the party offended?

The mediation of Christ thus stated, meets with and militates against two errors; one of those, who say he is only a Mediator as to his human nature; and that of others, who assert him to be only a Mediator as to his divine nature. But most certain it is, that there are various acts and works of Christ, as Mediator, in which both natures manifestly appear, and are concerned; not to make mention of the incarnation itself, or Christ's assumption of human nature, which manifestly implies both; for it was a divine Person that partook of flesh and blood, or assumed, not an angelic, but an human nature: it was the Word, which was in the beginning with God, and was God, that was made flesh, and dwelt among men; it was he that was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with him, that was found in fashion as a man, and took on him the form of a servant; it was God manifest in the flesh. In the obedience of Christ both natures are to be perceived; not only the human nature, in his being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; but the divine nature also; or otherwise, where is the wonder, that "though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered", (Heb. 5:8) and it was that which gave virtue to his obedience, and made it satisfactory to the justice of God, and made the law more honourable than the perfect and perpetual obedience of angels and men could do. In the act of laying down his life for men, both natures appear; the human nature, which is passive in it, and is the life laid down; the divine nature, or the divine Person of Christ, who is active in it, and laid down his life of himself, he having such a power over his life as man, and that at his dispose, as no mere creature ever had; and both are to be observed in his taking of it up again; his human nature, in his body being raised from

the dead; his divine nature or person, in raising it up of himself, whereby he was declared to be the Son of God with power: he was put to death in the flesh, in human nature, and quickened in the Spirit, or by his divine nature; the sacrifice of himself, was his own act, as Mediator; what was offered up were his soul and body, his whole human nature; this was offered by his eternal Spirit, or divine nature, which gave virtue to it, and made it a proper atoning sacrifice for sin. To observe no more, the redemption and purchase of his people, is a plain proof of both natures being concerned in his work as Mediator; the purchase price, or the price of redemption, is his precious blood, his blood as man; but what gave virtue to that blood, and made it a sufficient ransom price, is, that it was the blood of him that is God as well as man; and therefore God is said to purchase the church with his own blood (Acts 20:28).

3. It was not only requisite and necessary, that the Mediator should be God and man, but that he should be both in one Person, or that the two natures should be united in one Person; or, rather, that the human nature should be taken up, and united to, and subsist in the Person of the Son of God; for the human nature, as it has no personality of itself, it adds none to the Son of God; it is no constituent part of his Person; he was a divine Person, before his assumption of human nature; and what he assumed was not a person, but a nature, and is called a "thing, nature, seed", (Luke 1:35; Heb. 2:16) had it been a person, there would be two persons in Christ, and so two mediators, contrary to the express words of scripture, (1 Tim. 2:5) and if the human nature was a person, as it must be a finite one, what was done and suffered by it, must be finite also, and of no use but to that person, and could have no sufficient virtue and value in them to justify men, and atone for sin; but these two natures being in personal union, the works and actions of either, though distinct and peculiar to each, yet belong to the whole Person, and are predicated of it; and so those of the human nature have virtue and efficacy in them, from the personal union, to make them effectual to the purposes for which they were designed, without which they would be ineffectual. Hence it may be observed, that Christ is described in one nature, by qualities, works, and actions, which belong to him in the other, and is what divines call a communication of idioms, or properties; thus the Lord of glory is said to be crucified; God is said to purchase the church with his blood; and the Son of man is said to be in heaven, while he was here on earth, (1 Cor. 2:8; Acts 20:28; John 3:13) the advantage of this personal union is, that the divine nature has an influence upon, and gives virtue and dignity to whatsoever is done or suffered in the human nature; which is of the utmost concern in the mediation of Christ: nor is it

any objection that two natures should influence one and the same action, or be concerned in the production or perfection of it; when it is observed, that the soul and body of man, united together, concur in the performance of the same action, whether good or bad. I shall next enquire,

Thirdly, How Christ came to be the Mediator of the covenant, even the Mediator of reconciliation in it: it was owing originally to a thought in the heart of God, the offended Party; whose thoughts were "thoughts of peace, and not of evil", towards offending man; this affair began with God the Father; "All things are of God", that is, the Father, as appears by what follows; "Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation"; the doctrine of it, to publish and declare to the world; the sum and substance of which is, "to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself", (2 Cor. 5:18, 19) that is, consulting with Christ his Son, and with him contriving the scheme and method of reconciling to himself the world of his elect, considered as sinful fallen creatures in Adam: upon the first thought of peace and reconciliation, a council of peace was held between the divine Persons, which issued in a covenant of peace in which it was proposed to Christ, and he agreed to it, to be the Peace maker, upon which he was constituted the Mediator of it; "I was set up from everlasting", (Prov. 8:23) says Christ; that is, by his divine Father; though not without his own consent: or, "I was anointed", which does not design a collation of any gifts, qualifying him for the office of Mediator; as when he is said to be anointed with the Holy Ghost; only his investiture with that office, so expressed, because the rite of anointing was used in the consecration of kings, priests, and prophets to their office. And God not only set him up, but "set" him "forth", in his eternal purposes and decrees, to be the "propitiation for sin", to make reconciliation and satisfaction for it, (Rom. 3:25) and declared him in prophecy to be the Prince of peace, and the Man that should appear in human nature, and make peace and reconciliation between him and men; he sanctified him, or set him apart to this office before the world began; and in the fulness of time, sent him to be the propitiation, or propitiatory sacrifice, for the sins of men; and even before his incarnation, being constituted in covenant the Mediator of it, he acted as such, throughout the whole Old Testament dispensation: he exercised in each of his offices then; his prophetic office, by making known to Adam the covenant of grace, immediately after his fall; by preaching by his Spirit to the disobedient in the times of Noah, the spirits that were in prison, in the times of the apostle Peter; and by his Spirit, in the prophets testifying beforehand his own sufferings, and the glory that should follow. His Kingly office, in gathering, governing, and protecting his church and people, who

acknowledged him as their King, Judge, and Lawgiver: and his Priestly office, through the virtue of his blood reaching backward to the foundation of the world, and therefore said to be the Lamb slain so early, (Rev. 13:8) and instances there are of his intercession under the former dispensation, (Zech. 1:12, 13, 3:1-4) the actual existence of Christ's human nature from eternity, was not necessary to his being a Mediator of the covenant; it was enough that he agreed in covenant, to be man in time; that this was known he would be, and was certain he should be; and accordingly he was, from the instant of the covenant making, reckoned and accounted, and bore the name of the God-man and Mediator, and acted as such. Some parts of his work did not require the actual existence of the human nature; he could draw nigh to God, as Jehovah's fellow, without it; he could treat with God about terms of peace, and promise to fulfil them, and covenant with God without it: it no more required the actual existence of his human nature, to covenant with his Father, about the reconciliation and redemption of man, than it required that the Father should assume such a nature to covenant with his Son about the same: there were other parts of Christ's work as Mediator, which required its actual existence; as obedience to the law, and suffering death, the penalty of it; but then, and not before, was it necessary for him to assume it, when the fulness of time was come agreed on, to obey and suffer. It only remains now,

Fourthly, To show what a Mediator Christ is, the excellency of him, and the epithets which belong to him as such. And,

1. He is the one and only Mediator; "There is one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus"; and there is no other: the papists plead for other mediators, angels and saints departed; and distinguish between a Mediator of redemption, and a mediator of intercession; the former, they own, is peculiar to Christ, the latter common to angels and saints; but there is no Mediator of intercession, but who is a Mediator of redemption and reconciliation; the instances produced are insufficient, and respect either the uncreated angel, Jesus Christ himself, (Zech. 1:12; Rev. 8:3) or saints, ministers, and members of churches in the present state, and not as departed, (Rev. 5:8) and if is to be understood of departed spirits, it is only an (Rev. 6:9) instance of prayer for themselves, and not for others: the passages in (Ex. 32:13; Job 5:1) with others, are quite impertinent.

2. Christ is a Mediator of men only, not of angels; good angels need not any, and as for evil angels, none is provided nor admitted, as before observed. Yet not of all men; for the world, said to be reconciled to God by Christ, is not all the individuals in it; but the world Christ gave his flesh, or human nature for the life of, since there is a world for which he is not so much as a Mediator of intercession, and much less a Mediator of reconciliation (see 2

Cor. 5:19; John 6:51, 17:9). The persons for whom Christ acted as a Mediator, by means of death, for the redemption of their transgressions, were such as were called, and received the promise of the eternal inheritance (Heb. 9:15).

3. Yet he is the Mediator both for Jews and Gentiles; for some of both these are chosen vessels of mercy; and God is a covenant God, not to the Jews only, but to the Gentiles also; and Christ is a Propitiation, not for the sins of the Jews only, but for the sins of the whole world, or of God's elect throughout the whole world: and therefore both have access to God through the one Mediator, Christ, (Rom. 9:23, 24, 3:29, 30; 1 John 2:2; Eph. 2:18).

4. Christ is Mediator both for Old and New Testament saints; there is but one Mediator for both, but one Way to the Father, which is Christ the Way, the Truth, and the Life; but one Way of life, peace, reconciliation, and salvation; but one Redeemer and Saviour; but one name given under heaven among men, whereby they can be saved; Old and New Testament saints are saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus; he is the Foundation of the apostles and prophets.

5. Christ is a prevalent Mediator, his mediation is always effectual, ever succeeds, and is infallible; as his work was to make peace and reconciliation, and he agreed and engaged to make it; he has made it, the thing is done, and done effectually; and as for his prayers, they are always heard, his intercession ever prevails, and is never in vain; "I knew that thou hearest me always" (John 11:42).

6. Christ is an everlasting Mediator; he was Mediator from everlasting, and acted as such throughout the whole Old Testament period and still continues; he has an unchangeable priesthood; his blood always speaks peace and pardon, and he ever lives to make intercession; and when his mediatorial kingdom will be completed, and there will be no need of him, either as a Mediator of reconciliation or intercession, at least in the manner he has been, and now is; for sin being wholly removed from the saints, even as to the being of it, they may have access to God, and he may communicate unto them, without the intervention of a Mediator; as is the case of the holy angels; though Christ may be the medium of the glory and happiness of his people to all eternity; and since the happiness of the saints will greatly lie in beholding the glory of Christ as God-man, and the glory of God will be most illustriously displayed in him, it may be admitted: I shall observe no more, only that this office of Christ, as Mediator, includes his Kingly, Priestly, and Prophetic offices; all which will be considered in their proper place.

Chapter 12

OF CHRIST, THE SURETY OF THE COVENANT.

The surety-ship of Christ is a branch of his mediatorial office; one way in which Christ has acted the part of a Mediator between God and men, is by engaging on their behalf, to do and suffer whatever the law and justice of God required, to make satisfaction for their sins. The Greek word for "surety" εψψυχξ;, is used but once throughout the whole New Testament, (Heb. 7:22) and there of Christ; where he is said to be made, or become, "the Surety of a better testament", or covenant. And the word is derived either from σψψοχ;, "near", because a surety draws nigh to one on the behalf of another, and lays himself under obligation to him for that other; thus Christ drew nigh to his Father, and became a Surety to him for them; hence those words, "I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me; for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?" (Jer. 30:21) or rather, it is derived from ψυιοϖ, which signifies the "hand"; because when one becomes a Surety, he either puts something into the hand of another for security, or rather puts his hand into the hand of another, or strikes hands with him; a rite much used in surety-ship, and is often put for it, and used as synonymous; see (Prov. 6:1, 17:18, 22:26). Snidas derives it from יקי, קִי the "earth", because that is the firmest of the elements, and remains immoveable, and may denote the firmness and security of the promise, or bond, which a surety gives to one for another. The Hebrew word for a "surety", in the Old Testament, 3â€œI27, (Gen. 43:9) and elsewhere, has the signification of "mixing", because, as Stockins observes, in surety-ship persons are so mixed among themselves, and joined together, that the one is thereby bound to the other: and, upon the whole, Christ, as a Surety, drew nigh to his Father on the behalf of the elect, struck hands with him, and gave him firm security for them, and put himself in their place and stead, and engaged to perform everything for them that should be required of him; for the better understanding this branch of Christ's office in the covenant, it may be proper to consider,

1. First, In what sense Christ is the Surety of the covenant. And,

1a. First, He is not the Surety for his Father, to his people, engaging that the promises made by him in covenant shall be fulfilled; which is the Socinian sense of Christ's surety-ship; for though the promises were made to Christ, and are Yea and Amen in him; and many of them, such as respect him, were fulfilled in him, and by him, as the minister of the circumcision, (Gal. 3:16; 2 Cor. 1:20; Rom. 15:8). Yet, such is the faithfulness of God that has promised, that there needs no surety for him; his faithfulness is sufficient, which he will not suffer to fail; he is God, that cannot lie, nor deny himself; there is no danger of his breaking his word, and not fulfilling his promise, which may be depended on, and strongly confided in: and if his word was

not enough, he has joined his oath to it; so that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, the heirs of promise might have strong consolation, in believing the fulfilment of every promise made (Heb. 6:18). Besides, though Christ is equal with his Father, is Jehovah's fellow, and has all the perfections of Deity in him, yet he is not greater than he; and, with reverence to him be it said, he cannot give a greater security, than the word and oath of God, or that will lay a firmer foundation for confidence in the promises of God; and it is with an ill grace these men advance such a notion; since they make Christ to be but a mere man; and what dependence can there be upon him, when cursed is the man that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm? (Jer. 17:5) and what greater security is it possible that a mere man should give, than what the promise of God itself gives? Or what additional strength can a creature give to that, to induce a stronger belief of it? Nor,

lb. Secondly, Is Christ in such sense a Surety, as civilians call a "φιδεφυσσορ", or such a surety that is jointly engaged with a debtor, for the payment of a debt; or is so bound for another, as that other remains under obligation, and the obligation of the surety is only an accession to the principal obligation, which is made stronger thereby, and the creditor has the greater security; yet still the principal debtor is left under his debt, that is not removed from him, and he is under obligation to pay it, if able; and it is first to be demanded of him, or should his surety desert his surety-ship, and not make satisfaction. But now none of these things are to be supposed in Christ's surety-ship.

lbl. He is not a mere accessory to the obligation of his people for payment of their debts; he and they are not engaged in one joint bond for payment; he has taken their whole debt upon himself, as the apostle Paul did in the case of Onesimus; and he has paid it off, and entirely discharged it alone.

Ib2. Nor was any such condition made in his surety-ship engagements for his people, that they should pay if they were able; for God the Father, to whom Christ became a Surety, knew, and he himself, the Surety, knew full well, when this surety-ship was entered into, that they were not able to pay, and never would be; yea, that it was impossible for them, in their circumstances, ever to pay; for having failed in their obedience to God, all after acts of obedience, though ever so perfect, could not make amends, or satisfy for that disobedience, since to those God has a prior right; and their failure in obedience, brings upon them a debt of punishment, which is everlasting, and "ad infinitum"; and, if left on them, would be ever paying, and never paid (see Luke 7:41, 42; Matthew 18:24, 25, 5:26, 25:46).

Ib3. Nor is such a supposition to be made, that Christ might desert his

surety-ship, withdraw himself from it; this indeed has been supposed by some: but though Christ was not obliged to become a Surety, he voluntarily engaged in this work, and cheerfully took it on him; yet when he had undertaken it he could not relinquish it, without being guilty of disobedience to his Father, and of unfaithfulness to his own engagements; for from the instant he became a Surety for his people, he became a Servant to his Father, and he called and reckoned him as such; "Thou art my servant, O Israel; behold my servant whom I uphold", (Isa. 49:3, 42:1) and laid his commands upon him, both to obey his law, and lay down his life for his people, both which he undertook to do, and did perform; or otherwise he could not have had the character of God's righteous Servant, nor would have been faithful to him that appointed him, nor to himself, (Isa. 53:10; Heb. 3:2) and consequently could not be without sin, which God forbid should ever be said or supposed of the holy Jesus, who did no sin, nor was guile found in his mouth; yet this has been supposed of him by some, and the dreadful consequences of it, which have been blasphemously uttered by some schoolmen and popish writers, not fit to be mentioned.

Ib4. Nor is it to be supposed, that Christ might not fulfil his surety-ship engagements, or not make satisfaction, as might be expected; since if he did not, it must be either for want of will, or want of power; not of will, since the persons he became a surety for, he bore the strongest affection to; these were the sons of men, in whom was all his delight from everlasting; and such his love to them, that nothing whatever could separate from it: nor could it be for want of power, since, as a divine Person, he is the mighty God; as Mediator, has all power in heaven and in earth; as man, was made strong by the Lord for this work, and had a power, as such, to lay down his life, and take it up again: and should he have deserted his surety-ship, and not have made the promised and expected satisfaction, the purposes of God, respecting the salvation of the elect by Christ, must have been frustrated, and made null and void; the council of peace held concerning it would have been without effect; the covenant of grace abolished; the salvation of God's people not obtained, and the glory of God, of his grace, mercy, truth, and faithfulness lost; yea, Christ himself must have been deprived of his mediatorial glory; all too shocking to be admitted. But,

Ic. Thirdly, Christ is in such sense a Surety, as civilians call an expromissor, one that promises out and out, absolutely engages to pay another's debt; takes another's obligation, and transfers it to himself, and by this act dissolves the former obligation, and enters into a new one, which civilians call "novation"; so that the obligation no longer lies on the principal debtor, but he is set free, and the Surety is under the obligation, as if he was the principal debtor,

or the guilty person. Now this sort of surety-ship being most similar, and coming nearest to Christ's surety-ship, is made use of to express and explain it; though they do not in everything tally; for the civil law neither describes nor admits such a Surety among men as Christ is; who so substituted himself in the room and stead of sinners, as to suffer punishment in soul and body for them; but in some things there is an agreement.

lei. Christ, by his surety-ship, has took the whole debt of his people upon himself, and made himself solely responsible for it; he has dissolved thereby their obligation to payment or punishment, having taken it on himself; so that they were by it entirely set free from the very instant he became their Surety; it is a rule that will hold good, as Maccovius observes, that as soon as anyone becomes a surety for another, the other is immediately freed, if the surety be accepted: which is the case here; for from henceforward, God the Father looked for his debt, and expected satisfaction of Christ, and let the sinners go free, for whom he engaged; he was gracious, and said, "deliver" them "from going down to the pit; I have found a Ransom", (Job 33:24) just as when the apostle Paul became a surety for Onesimus; supposing him accepted as such by Philemon, Onesimus was set free; the apostle taking the whole debt and wrong upon himself, and promising to repay and make satisfaction, and which he wrote and signed with his own hand.

Ic2. When Christ became a Surety for his people, their sins were no longer imputed to them, but were imputed to Christ, were placed to his account, and he became responsible for them; it was not, at the time of his sufferings and death, that God laid on him first the iniquities of his people, and they were imputed and reckoned to him, and he accounted them as his own, (2 Cor. 5:19; Isa. 53:6; Ps. 40:12, 69:5) by which it appears, that obligation to payment of debts, or punishment, did not lie upon the principal debtor, or guilty person, but upon Christ, who became their Surety; for,

lc3. The Old Testament saints were really freed from guilt, condemnation, and death, before the actual payment was made by Christ their Surety; some had as full an application of the pardon of their sins, and as clear a view of their interest in Christ's righteousness, as their justifying righteousness before God, as any of the New Testament saints ever had; the one were saved by the grace of Christ as the other; yea, they were received into heaven, and actually glorified, before the surety-ship engagements of Christ were fulfilled (Isa. 43:25, 45:24, 25; Acts 15:11; Heb. 11:13-16). So that it is a plain case, that the obligation to payment and punishment lay not on those for whom Christ became a Surety, but was transferred from them to him; unless this absurdity can be admitted, that such an obligation lay on glorified saints, till the actual payment was made by Christ; or that there was a "limbus patrum",

as the papists say, where the saints, before Christ's coming, were detained; but were set free by him when he came. Ic4. It is certain that the Old Testament saints had knowledge of the surety-ship engagements of Christ, and prayed and pleaded for the application of the benefits of them to them, (Job 19:25; Ps. 119:122; Isa. 38:14) and which they enjoyed: and such was the dignity of Christ's person, and his known faithfulness to his engagements, and the eternity of them, which with God has no succession, they were always present with him, and in full view, as if actually performed; before and after made no difference in the sight of God, with whom a thousand years are as one day, and eternity itself as but a moment. And now, from this surety-ship of Christ arise both the imputation of sin to Christ, and the imputation of his righteousness to his people; this is the ground and foundation of both, and on which the priestly office of Christ stands, and in virtue of which it is exercised (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:20-22). I proceed,

2. Secondly, To consider what Christ as a Surety, engaged to do. And,

2a. First, He engaged to pay the debts of his people, and satisfy for the wrong and injury done by them; this may be illustrated by the instance of the apostle Paul engaging for Onesimus; which is thus expressed, "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on my account; I Paul, have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it", (Philem. 1:18, 19). Sin is a wrong and injury done to divine justice, and to the holy law of God, broken by it; which Christ undertook to satisfy for; and sins are debts; see (Matthew 6:12) compared with (Luke 11:4) not proper ones, for then they might be committed with impunity, since it is right and commendable to pay debts: but in an improper sense, as debts oblige to payment, so sins to punishment; even to endure the curse of the law, and death eternal, the sanction of it: these debts, or sins, are infinite objectively, as they are contracted and committed against an infinite being, and require punishment of a creature ad infinitum; and therefore not to be paid off, or answered, by a finite creature; but Christ being an infinite Person, as God, was able to pay off those debts, and answer for those sins, and engaged to do it, and has done it. There is a twofold debt paid by Christ, as the Surety of his people; the one is a debt of obedience to the law of God; this he engaged to do, when he said, "Lo, I come to do thy will"; thy law is within my heart: and accordingly he was made under the law, and yielded perfect obedience to it, by which his people are made righteous; and the other is a debt of punishment, incurred through failure of obedience in them; the curse of the law he has endured, the penalty of it, death; and by paying both these debts, the whole righteousness of the law is fulfilled in his people, considered in him their Head and Surety. Now let it be observed, that these debts are not pecuniary ones, though there is

an allusion to such, and the language is borrowed from them; but criminal ones, a wrong and injury done, as supposed in the case of Onesimus; and are of such a nature as deserve and require punishment in body and soul, being transgressions of the righteous law of God; and God is to be considered, not merely as a creditor, but as the Judge of the whole earth, who will do right, and who will by no means clear the guilty, without a satisfaction to his justice; and yet there is a mixture of grace, mercy, and goodness in God, with his justice in this affair, by admitting a Surety to obey, suffer, and die, in the room and stead of his people, which he was not obliged unto; nor does the law give the least hint of an allowance of it; nor do the civil laws of men admit of any such thing, that an innocent person should suffer death in the room of one that is guilty, even though he consents to it, and desires it; because no man has a power over his own life, to dispose of it at pleasure; but God, who can dispense with his own law, if he pleases, has thought fit to explain it, and put a construction on it in favour of his people, where it is not express; and allow of a commutation of persons, that his Son should stand in their legal place and stead, obey, suffer, and die for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. This is owing to his sovereign grace and mercy; nor is at all inconsistent with his justice, since Christ fully consented to all this, who is the Province of life, and had power over his own life, as man, to lay it down, and take it up again; and since justice is fully satisfied, by the obedience and death of Christ, and the law magnified and made honourable, and more so than it could have been by all the obedience and sufferings of angels and men put together.

2b. Secondly, Another thing which Christ as a Surety engaged to do, was to bring all the elect safe to glory; this may he illustrated by Judah's surety-ship for Benjamin; thus expressed to his father, "I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him; if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever" (Gen. 43:9). And thus Christ became a Surety to his divine Father, for his beloved Benjamin, the chosen of God, and precious; as he asked them of his Father, and they were given into his hands, to be preserved by him, that none of them might be lost; he agreed that they should be required of his hand, everyone of them, and pass under the hand of him that telleth them, and their whole number appear complete, and none missing; as will be the case, when he shall say, "Lo, I, and the children which God hath given me" (Heb. 2:13). Christ engaged to "bring" his people to his Father; this was the work proposed to him, and which he agreed to do; "to bring Jacob again to him, and to restore the preserved of Israel", (Isa. 49:5, 6) to recover the lost sheep, to ransom them out of the hands of him that was stronger than they; to redeem

them from all iniquity, and from the law, its curse and condemnation, and save them with an everlasting salvation, and bring them safe to his Father in heaven; and because he laid himself under obligation to do all this; hence he says, "them also I must bring", into his fold here, and into heaven and glory hereafter, (John 10:16) and "set" them "before" his Father; as he did at his death, when all the elect were gathered together in one Head, even in him, to present them in the body of his flesh, through death, holy, unblameable, and unreproveable in the sight of God; and as he now does in heaven, where he appears in the presence of God for them, and they are set down in heavenly places in him, as their Head and Surety; and as he will at the last day, when he will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, the mediatorial kingdom, the kingdom of priests, complete and perfect, as he received them; and having first presented them to himself, as a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, he will present them faultless before the presence of his Father's glory, with exceeding joy; and will be so far from bearing any blame, having so fully discharged his surety-ship engagements, that he will appear without sin unto salvation; even without sin imputed, without the wrong done by his people put on his account; all being fully answered for according to agreement.

Chapter 13

OF CHRIST, THE TESTATOR OF THE COVENANT.

First, The covenant of grace bears the name, and has the nature of a testament: it is often called the new and better testament, as administered under the gospel dispensation, (Matthew 26:28; Heb. 7:22, 9:15) in distinction from the former: it is called a testament, in allusion to the last will and testament of men. And, la. Because it is the will of God himself, and not another; the will of him that is sovereign and absolute, who does according to his will in heaven and in earth, in nature, providence, and grace. The covenant is founded on the will of God, and is the pure effect of it; he was not obliged to make it; he freely and of his own accord came into it; so all the contracting parties in it, as has been before observed. A man's will or testament ought to be voluntary; he is not to be forced nor drawn, nor pressed to make it, contrary to his inclination; or otherwise it is not his own will. The covenant, or testament of God, is of his own making, without any influence from another; all the articles in it are of his free good will and pleasure; as, that he will be the covenant God of his people; that they shall be his sons and daughters; that they shall be his heirs, and joint heirs with Christ; that they shall enjoy all the blessings of grace, redemption, pardon, justification, regeneration, perseverance in grace and glory; for he hath bequeathed, in this will, both grace and glory to his people (Ps. 89:11;

Luke 12:32).

2. As a will consists of various legacies to various persons, so does the covenant of grace; some to Christ, for he, under different considerations, is a legatee in it, and a testator of it: all the elect, his spiritual seed and offspring, are bequeathed unto him, as his portion and inheritance, and with which he is greatly delighted (Deut. 32:9; Ps. 2:8, 16:6). "As my Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom", says he, (Luke 22:29) his mediatorial kingdom, a kingdom of priests, and which he disposed of to him in a testamentary way, as the word there used signifies. There are other legacies, such as before suggested, respecting grace and glory, left in this will for the brethren of Christ, among whom he is the firstborn, and so appointed principal heir, yea, heir of all things, and they joint heirs with him; and what is given to them, is in trust with him for them, particularly the inheritance bequeathed, which they obtain in him, and is reserved with him in heaven for them.

3. In wills, what a man disposes of, is, or should be, his own; no man has a power to dispose, nor ought to dispose of, what is another's, or not his own; or otherwise, his will is a void will, and such bequests void bequests. All the blessings of goodness, whether of nature, providence, or grace, are all the Lord's own, and he has a sovereign right to dispose of them as he pleases, and to give them to whomsoever he will; and against which no one has any just cause or reason to object; and if he does, it is to no purpose; "Is it not lawful for me", says the Testator of the covenant, "to do what I will with mine own?" Is thine eye evil, because I am good?" (Matthew 20:15).

4. This will, or testament, of Jehovah, is an ancient one, it was made in eternity; it is called an everlasting covenant, or testament; not only because it always continues, and will never become null and void, but because it is from everlasting; the bequests and donations made in it were made before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9). It is, indeed, sometimes called a new testament, not because newly made, but because newly published and declared, at least in a more clear and express manner; a new and fresh copy of it has been delivered out to the heirs of promise.

5. It is a will or testament that is unalterable; "Though it be but a man's covenant", or testament, "yet if it be confirmed" by his own handwriting and seal, and especially by his death, "no man disannulleth or addeth thereunto" (Gal. 3:15). The covenant of grace is ordered in all things, and sure; this testament, or will, is founded upon the immutability of the divine counsel; so that the heirs of promise, the legatees in it, may have strong consolation, and be fully assured of enjoying their legacies in it; which are the sure mercies of David, of David's Son and Antitype, as all the promises of it are Yea and Amen in him.

6. Testaments, or wills, are generally sealed as well as signed: the seals of God's will or testament are not the ordinances; circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace; it was a seal to Abraham, and to him only, that he should be the father of believing Gentiles; and that the same righteousness of faith should come upon them, which came upon him, when in uncircumcision: nor is baptism, which is falsely said to come in the room of it, and much less is it a seal of the covenant; nor the ordinance of the Lord's Supper; for though the blood of Christ, one of the symbols in it, is yet not that itself: but the seals are the Holy Spirit of God, and the blood of Christ; and yet the Holy Spirit is not such a seal that makes the covenant, or testament, surer in itself, only assures the Lord's people of their interest in it, by witnessing it to their spirits, by being in them the earnest of the inheritance bequeathed them, and by sealing them up unto the day of redemption; properly speaking, the blood of Christ is the only seal of this testament, by which it is ratified and confirmed; and therefore called the blood of the covenant, and the blood of the new testament, (Zech. 9:11; Matthew 26:28; Heb. 13:20).

7. To all wills there are commonly witnesses, and often three, and in some cases three are required. Now as God sware by himself, because he could sware by no greater; so because no other and proper witnesses could be had, to witness this will made in eternity, God himself, or the three divine Persons, became witnesses to it, the Three that bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost (1 John 5:7). Unless we choose to conceive of things in this manner; that as the Father, the first Person, gives the lead in all things in nature and in grace, and as he did in the council of peace, so in the covenant of grace, or in this testament, he may be considered as the maker of the will, or testament, and the Son and Spirit as witnesses to it.

8. This will, or testament, is registered in the sacred writings, from thence the probate of it is to be taken; the public notaries, or amanuenses, that have copied it under a divine direction, are the prophets and apostles; hence the writings of the one are called the Old Testament, and the writings of the other the New Testament, the latter being the more clear, full, and correct copy. The covenant of grace having the nature of a testament, shows that there is no restipulation in it on the part of men; no more than there is a restipulation of legatees in a will; what is bequeathed to them being without their knowledge and consent, and without anything being required of them, to which they give their assent.

The covenant of grace is properly a covenant to Christ, in which he restipulates; but a testament to his people, or a pure covenant of promise. Also it may be observed, that the legacies in this testament are owing to the

goodwill of the testator, and not to any merit in the legatees; "For if theft which are of the law be heirs", if they that seek eternal life by the works of the law be heirs of grace and glory, then, says the apostle, "faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect", which declare it to be a free donation: and so again, "If the inheritance be of the law", or to be obtained by the works of it, "it is no more of promise"; these will not consist with, but contradict one another; "but God gave it to Abraham by promise"; as he has done to all the legatees in his covenant or will (see Rom. 4:14; Gal. 3:18).

Secondly, The Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, may be considered as testator of the covenant of grace, as it is a will or testament, and which is plainly suggested in Hebrews 9:15-17 for, 2a. Christ as God has an equal right to dispose of things as his divine Father, seeing all that the Father has are his; as all the perfections of deity, so all persons, and all things in nature, providence, and grace; particularly all the blessings of grace and of glory. He is over all God blessed for ever, and all things are of him and owe their being to him, and are at his dispose; yea, all things are delivered by the Father to him as mediator: and if the Spirit disposes of his gifts and graces, dividing them to every man severally as he will; the Son of God may be reasonably thought to have a power and right to dispose of the blessings of his goodness to whomsoever he pleases. 2b. Nothing is disposed of in the covenant, or testament, without his counsel and consent; for though with respect to creatures, angels and men, it may be said of God, "with whom took he counsel?" Yet with his Son, the Wonderful Counsellor, the Angel of the great council, he did; for the council of peace was between them both, the Father and the Son, which respected the salvation of men, and the donation of grace and glory to them. 2c. Nor was anything given in covenant, or disposed of in the will and testament of God, but with respect to the death of Christ; all promised in covenant was on condition of Christ's making his soul an offering for sin, and of pouring out his soul unto death, (Isa. 53:10-12) all the blessings of grace bestowed on Old Testament saints, as they were legacies in this testament, so they were given forth in virtue of the blood of the covenant, which had a virtue that reached backward; Christ being the lamb slain from the foundation of the world; and there is no blessing of grace in the covenant, but what is on account of the death of Christ the testator; redemption of transgressions, that were under both the first and second testaments, was by means of death; and without shedding of blood there was no remission under either dispensation; and it is the death of Christ that secures from condemnation, as well as by it reconciliation is made. 2d. Whatever is given in this will, is given to Christ first, to be disposed of by him, so that he is the executor as well as the testator of it; he was set up

as mediator from everlasting; was prevented with the blessings of goodness, or had them first given to him; he was possessed of a fulness of grace, and grace was given to the elect in him before the world began; not only the blessings of grace were put into his hands to dispose of, but eternal life, for he has power to give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him; whether this be considered as an inheritance which He, the Word of God's grace, the essential Word, is able to give among them that are sanctified by faith in him; or as a kingdom prepared for them in the purposes of God, and which Christ gives a right unto, and a meekness for; yea, he himself disposes of it in a testamentary way, "and I appoint unto you a kingdom", dispose of it to you by will and testament (Luke 22:29). Wherefore, 3. Thirdly, The death of Christ is necessary to put this will in force, to give strength unto it, that it may be executed according to the design of the maker of it; "for where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator; for a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all, while the testator liveth" (Heb. 9:16, 17). It is not the death of any, only of the testator himself, that gives validity to his will, or renders it executable; and it is only the death of Christ that gives force and strength unto, or ratifies and confirms the covenant of grace; not the death of slain sacrifices, for though by the blood and death of these the first testament was dedicated, ratified, and confirmed in a typical way, as these were types of Christ in his bloodshed and death, (Heb. 9:19-22) yet the new testament is only, really, truly, and properly ratified and confirmed by the death of Christ itself; and whereas the Father and the Spirit were jointly concerned with Christ in making this will or testament, it was not necessary that they should die, nor could they, since they never assumed a nature capable of dying; only it was necessary that one of the testators should assume a nature capable of death, and in it die to give force to this will; and infinite wisdom judged it most proper and fitting that the Son of God should do it, who took upon him, not the nature of angels, who are incorporeal, immaterial and immortal spirits, and die not; but he became a partaker of flesh and blood, of human nature, that he might die and ratify the testament and will he was concerned in the making of; and this was necessary to give it strength and force: not as if it was alterable until the death of Christ, as the wills of men are until their death, which while they live are liable to be altered again and again; for the first thoughts of God always remain, and that to all generations; his mind is never turned, his counsel is immutable, and so his covenant and testament founded thereon is unalterable; nor that the inheritance bequeathed in this will could not be enjoyed before the death of Christ; this indeed is the case with respect to the wills of men, the legacies are not payable, nor estates bequeathed enjoyed,

until the testator dies; but such is not only the certainty of Christ's death, and which with God was as if it was, before it really was, but such is the virtue and efficacy of it, that it reaches backward to the beginning of the world, as before observed; wherefore the Old Testament saints not only received the promise of eternal inheritance, but enjoyed it before the death of Christ, though in virtue of it, for they are said to "inherit the promises", that is, the things promised, (Heb. 9:15, 6:11) but the death of Christ was necessary to confirm the covenant or testament, that the legatees might appear to have a legal right to what was bequeathed to them, law and justice being satisfied thereby; so that no caveat could be put in against them, and no obstruction made to their claim of legacies, and their enjoyment of them; and no danger of this will being ever set aside. There is another concern and part which Christ has in the covenant, and that is the "messenger" of it, (Mai. 3:1) but as that respects the administration of it, it will be considered in its proper place, after the fall of man.

Chapter 14

OF THE CONCERN THE SPIRIT OF GOD HAS IN THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

Having considered the parts which the Father and the Son have taken in the covenant, the part which the Holy Spirit has in it is next to be treated of; who was not a mere bystander, spectator, and witness of this solemn transaction, compact, and agreement, between the Father and the Son, but was a party concerned in it. And,

1. First, The third person, the Spirit, gave his approbation of, and assent unto every article in the covenant.

la. In general, what respected the salvation of the chosen ones; for that is the grand and principal article of the covenant; "this", says David, speaking of the covenant, "is all my salvation", (2 Sam. 23:5) that is, the whole of his salvation; all things relative to it were provided for in it, and secured by it; in the economy of which each Person took his part; and that of the Spirit is Sanctification; which makes meet for the enjoyment of complete and eternal salvation; hence called "the sanctification of the Spirit" (2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2). And this clearly shows, that the Spirit approved of, and assented to the whole scheme of salvation, or of the thing itself in general; or otherwise he would never have taken a part in it; and as it was the purpose and will of God the Father to save men by his Son, and he appointed them to obtain salvation by him; so the Son of God came to seek and save men, being sent of God for that purpose in which mission of him the Spirit joined; "Now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me", (Isa. 48:16) which is a plain proof that he

approved of and assented to it, that the Son of God should be the Saviour of men; and whereas it was proper that the Son of God should assume human nature, and in it work out the salvation of men; and which was agreed upon between the Father and the Son; so it was approved of and assented to by the Spirit; as appears from his concern in the incarnation of Christ; for what was "conceived in the Virgin was of the Holy Ghost", (Matthew 1:18, 20) and, seeing it was necessary that the Saviour of men should suffer and die for them, to satisfy law and justice; and the divine Father enjoined his Son to lay down his life for them; to which command he became obedient; so the Spirit declared his approbation of it, by testifying beforehand, in the prophets, "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow"; as well as was assisting to the human nature of Christ, in the sacrifice of himself; since it was "through the eternal Spirit", he offered up himself without spot to God (1 Peter 1:11; Heb 9:14). Once more, as it was highly proper, that as Christ should be delivered to death for the offences of men, so that he should rise again for their justification; or otherwise, the whole affair of salvation would have miscarried; hence the Father in covenant enjoined his Son, as to lay down his life, so to take it up again; and which he did, and in which the Spirit was concerned; and which showed his approbation of this closing part of the scheme of salvation by Christ (see Rom. 1:4). lb. The Spirit of God approved of and assented to all the promises in the covenant: there are many exceeding great and precious promises in the Scriptures, which are transcribed from the covenant, and are all Yea and Amen in Christ, and in which the Spirit has a concern; hence he is called "the Holy Spirit of promise", (Eph. 1:13) indeed, he himself is the great promise of the covenant; promised both to Christ the Head, and to his members, (Matthew 12:18; Isa. 42:1, 44:3; Gal. 3:14) and he is concerned in the application of every promise to the elect; it is he that remembers to them the word of promise, on which the Lord has sometimes caused them to hope; and it is he that opens the promise to them, instructs them in it, and shows them what is contained in it, the nature, use, and suitableness of it; it is he that applies the promises to them at a proper season, when they are like apples of gold in pictures of silver; and he it is that keeps up their faith and hope, as to the grand promise of eternal life; so that they, "through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness by faith", (John 14:26; Prov. 25:11; Gal. 5:5) by which it appears, that he approved of every promise of the covenant made in eternity, or he would never act the part he does, in the application of them in time.

lc. The blessed Spirit approved of and gave his assent to all the grants made to Christ, and to his people in the covenant, to the sure mercies of David, to the spiritual blessings wherewith the elect are blessed in heavenly

places in Christ; for he takes of these in time, and shows them to the persons interested in them, and their interest therein, (John 16:14) which he would not do, if he had not approved of the grants of these blessings to them, in the everlasting covenant; as for instance, the blessing of a justifying righteousness, to be wrought out by Christ, was provided in the covenant; and which being brought in, is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith: and besides the external revelation of it in the gospel, the Spirit of God brings near this righteousness, and sets it in the view of an awakened sinner, and shows him its suitableness, fulness, and excellency, works faith in him to receive it, and pronounces in his conscience his justification by it; hence it is said of such, that they are "justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit our God" (1 Cor. 6:11). Pardon of sin is another blessing of the covenant through Christ, and the Spirit takes the blood of Christ, the blood of the covenant, shed for the remission of sin, and sprinkles it on the conscience, and thereby speaks peace and pardon to it; saying, Son, or "daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee" (Heb 8:12, 10:22, 12:24). Adoption also, a blessing of grace, provided in the covenant, and which the Spirit bears witness to and makes application of, and is sent down into the hearts of the covenant and adopted ones for that purpose, and is hence called "the Spirit of adoption", (2 Cor. 6:18; Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:15, 16). In short, all the grace given to the elect in Christ, before the world began, all the things that are freely given them of God in the covenant, the Spirit in time makes known unto them, and declares and testifies their interests in them, (1 Cor. 1:12, 2:9-11). All which abundantly prove his approbation of and assent unto everything contained in the covenant of grace. 2. Secondly, There are many things which the Holy Spirit himself undertook and engaged in covenant to do; and nothing more strongly proves this than his doing them; for had he not agreed to do them, they would not have been done by him. And,

2a. First, Some things he has done, as he agreed to do, with respect to Christ; he formed the human nature of Christ, in which he obeyed and suffered for the salvation of the elect: every individual of human nature is, indeed, made by him; "The Spirit of God hath made me", says Elihu, (Job 33:4) but the individual of Christ's human nature, was "fearfully and wonderfully made" by him, as David, representing him, says he was "in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth", in the womb of the Virgin, according to the model of it, in the book of God's purposes and decrees; it was produced by the power of the Highest, the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, without the instrumentality of man; and so was free from the pollution of sin, propagated by ordinary and natural generation, and therefore called the holy thing, born of the Virgin (Ps. 139:14-16; Luke 1:35).

The Spirit of God filled the same human nature with his gifts and graces without measure, which are the oil of gladness he anointed him with above his fellows, and thereby fitted and qualified him as man, for the discharge of his office as Mediator, (Isa. 11:1-3, 42:1, 61:1) he descended upon him as a dove at his baptism; which was the signal by which John the Baptist knew he was the Messiah, and pointed him out as such to others; he assisted him as man, in the ministry of the gospel, whereby he spake as never man did, and with an authority the Scribes and Pharisees did not; and in the performance of miracles; for he cast out devils, as he himself says, by "the Spirit of God" (Matthew 12:28). He also was concerned in Christ's offering up himself a Sacrifice; and in his resurrection from the dead, as before observed; whereby he glorified him, as well as by other things, Christ said he would (John 16:14). All which he did according to covenant agreements and settlements.
2b. Secondly, There are other things he has done, as he agreed to do, with respect to men; either,

2bl. To such as are in a public office and capacity, as the prophets of the Old Testament; whom he inspired to speak and write as they did, (2 Peter 1:21) and the apostles of the New, who were endowed with power from on high, with his extraordinary gifts to preach the gospel, in all languages, to all people, and to confirm it with miracles, (Acts 1:4, 5, 2:4; Heb 2:3, 4) and ordinary ministers of the word, in all succeeding generations, with gifts and grace suitable to their office; whom he calls and separates to it, directs where they should go, he has work for them to do, and makes them overseers of flocks or churches committed to their care, (Acts 13:2, 16:6, 7, 20:28) and it is he that makes the word preached by them effectual to the conviction and conversion of sinners, and to the comfort and edification of saints; and whereby he conveys himself into the hearts of men (1 Thess. 1:5, 6; 2 Cor. 3:6, 8; Gal. 3:2). All which he undertook to do, and has done. Or,

2b2. To such as are in a private capacity, to whom he is,

2b2a. A Spirit "of conviction"; he convinces them of sin, original, actual, of all their sins of thought, word, and deed; of the demerit of sin, and of the inability of men to make atonement for it; and brings them to such a sense of it, as to loath it, and themselves for it; to blush and be ashamed of it, and to have such a godly sorrow for it, which works repentance unto salvation. And "of righteousness"; of the insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them before God; and of the excellency and suitableness of the righteousness of Christ. And "of judgment"; that there is one not to be escaped, and at which all must appear, and in which there will be no standing, but in the righteousness of Christ (John 16:8).

2b2b. A Spirit "of regeneration" and "renovation"; men must be born

again, and they that are born of God, even of the Spirit of God, are renewed by him in the Spirit of their minds; all things are made new; a new man is created in them, a new heart and a new spirit are given unto them, according to the covenant of grace; hence we read of "regeneration", and "the renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5). 2b2c. A Spirit "of faith"; all men have not faith, only God's elect; and therefore true faith is called the faith of God's elect; and those that have it, have it not of themselves, it is the gift of God; it is of the operation of God, a work of his almighty power, begun, carried on, and performed with power, and that by the Holy Ghost: and therefore he is called "the Spirit of faith" (2 Cor. 4:13).

2b2d. A "Comforter", under which character he is often spoken of, and promised by Christ, that he should be sent by him, and from his Father, according to covenant agreements; and which office, as he freely undertook in covenant, he performs, by shedding abroad the love of God and Christ in the hearts of his people; by leading into the comfortable doctrines of the gospel; by opening and applying the precious promises of it; by taking of the things of Christ, and showing them to them; and by witnessing to them their adoption; and by being the earnest of their inheritance, and the sealer of them up unto the day of redemption.

2b2e. A Sanctifier; if any are sanctified, it is by the Spirit of God; sanctification is his work, and therefore called "the sanctification of the Spirit", as before observed: it is the Spirit that begins, and carries on, and finishes the work of grace and holiness upon the hearts of God's elect, without which no man shall see the Lord. He is the Spirit of strength to the saints, to enable them to exercise grace, and to perform duties he is put into them according to the covenant of grace, to cause them to walk in the statutes and judgments of the Lord to do them; to strengthen them to walk on in the ways of the Lord, and to persevere in faith and holiness to the end. And all this the Spirit of God does, as he engaged and undertook to do, in the everlasting covenant; and therefore he is said to "come", being sent, to do these things; not without his will and consent, but according to his voluntary engagements in covenant, without which he could not be sent by the Father and the Son, being equal to them; and this will account for the several passages where he is said to be sent by the Father, in the name of Christ, and by Christ, front the Father (John 14:16, 26, 15:26, 16:7; Gal. 4:6). This being all agreed on, and settled in the covenant between them.

Chapter 15

OF THE PROPERTIES OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE

I shall close the account of the covenant of Grace with the epithets or

properties of it; which may serve to lead more fully and clearly into the nature, use, and excellency of it; and which may in some measure be collected from what has been already observed. And, 1. It is an "eternal" covenant; not merely as to duration, being what will continue to eternity, and so is called an everlasting covenant, but as to the original of it; it was made in eternity, and commenced and bears date from eternity. The spring of it is the mercy, grace, and love of God; "I said", says God, "mercy shall be built up for ever"; there shall be such a display of it, as shall always abide; and in order to this it follows; "I have made a covenant with my chosen", with Christ, and the elect in him; which is a standing everlasting monument of mercy; and now "the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting"; not only as an attribute of God, but in the display of it to sinful miserable creatures; and where is there a display of it so early but in the covenant? (Ps. 89:2, 3, 28, 103:17) and which mercy is no other than the love and free favour of God exercising itself in such a manner towards sinful men; and which love, as it was bore to Christ, so to his people in him, before the foundation of the world (John 17:23, 24). The basis of the covenant, is God's election of men to eternal life; the foundation of God, which stands sure, and which laid a foundation for the covenant of grace; it is built upon it; the covenant is made with Christ, God's elect, and with men chosen in him, and who were chosen in him to be holy and happy, before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4). The council of peace, which was introductory to the covenant of grace, was of old, from everlasting; as all the counsels of God are; in this Christ was the everlasting Counsellor; as well as in the covenant the everlasting Father: God was in Christ from eternity, forming the scheme of man's peace, reconciliation, and salvation; which prepared and furnished sufficient matter for the everlasting covenant: Christ was set up as the Mediator of it "from everlasting"; from the beginning, or ever the earth was; his goings forth in it, in acts of love and grace towards his people, "were of old, from everlasting"; drawing nigh to his divine Father, and becoming their Surety, interposing between him and them as Mediator, engaging to do everything for them law and justice could require; and receiving on their account, all grants and promises made unto them, (Prov. 8:23; Mic. 5:2). The blessings of the covenant were put into the hands of Christ so early, and the elect were blessed with them in him, as they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and are the "grace" given to them in him, "before the world began" (Eph. 1:3, 4; 2 Tim. 1:9). There were also promises made, particularly the grand promise of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world was; and which promise of life is in Christ, as all the promises of the covenant are, being put into his hands so early; the heirs of them not having an actual being,

yet a representative one in him their Head (Titus 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:1). Now all this, proves the antiquity of the covenant of grace; nor is it any objection to it, that it is sometimes called the "second" and "new" covenant, (Heb. 8:7, 8, 13, 9:15, 12:24) for it is so called, not with respect to the covenant of works made with Adam, as if it was the second to that, and newer and later than that; for it was made long before that, even in eternity, as has been shown; but the distinctions of "first" and "second", "old" and "new", respect the different administrations of the same covenant of grace in time: the first administration of it began immediately after the fall of Adam, and continued under the patriarchs, and under the Mosaical dispensation, unto the coming of Christ; and then a new administration of it took place, which made the first old, and is called the second, with respect to that; and yet both, for substance, are the same covenant, made in eternity, but variously administered in time. There are several time covenants made with men; as with Adam, Noah, Abraham, the children of Israel, Phinehas, David, &c. But the covenant made with Christ, and the elect in him, was not made in time, but in eternity. It is a notion that commonly obtains, that God makes a covenant of grace with men when they believe, repent, &c. But it is no such thing; the covenant of grace does not then begin to be made, only to be made manifest; it then openly takes place, its blessings are bestowed, its promises applied, its grace is wrought in the hearts of men, when God puts his fear there, gives a new heart, and a new spirit, and puts his own Spirit there, to work faith, repentance, and every other grace; but then the covenant is not new made, but all this is done in virtue and in consequence of the covenant of grace made in eternity, and according to the tenor of that. 2. The covenant of grace is entirely free, it is altogether of free grace; grace is the moving cause of it; God was not induced to make it from any motive and condition in men. Each of the parties entered freely into it; the Father, of his own grace and good will to men, proposed the terms of the covenant to his Son; and the Son of God, from his great love he bore to the same persons, voluntarily agreed unto them; and the same love in the blessed Spirit, engaged him to undertake what he did in it; hence we read, as of the love of the Father, and of the love of the Son, so of the love of the Spirit, (Rom. 15:30) which love of the three divine Persons, no where more clearly and fully appears, than in the covenant of grace, and the performance of it. The act of election, which is the basis of the covenant on which it proceeds, and to which it is commensurate, is entirely of grace, and not of works, and therefore called "the election of grace", (Rom. 11:5, 6) the matter, sum and substance of the covenant is of grace; the blessings of it are all of grace, they all go by the name of "grace", given in Christ before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9). Adoption is

owing to the free favour of God; a justifying righteousness is the gift of his grace; pardon of sin is according to the riches of his grace; and so every other blessing. The promises of it, which are exceeding great and precious, flow from the grace of God: when promises are made, the faithfulness of God is engaged to fulfil them; but it is of his grace and good will that he makes them; he is not obliged to make promise of any thing to his creatures. The grace of God greatly appears in making faith the recipient of all blessings and promises; which itself is not of men, but is the gift of God; and by divine wisdom is put in the place it is, to receive all the blessings and promises of the covenant; "That it might be by grace"; that it might appear that all is of grace; "to the end the promise", and so every blessing, "might be sure to all the seed" (Rom. 4:16). The end of making the covenant is, the glory of the grace of God; as God has made all things for himself, for his own glory, in nature and providence; so all things in grace, and particularly the covenant of grace, is made and stored with all the blessings of it, to the glory of his grace, (Eph. 1:3-6) and therefore with great propriety may, on all accounts, be called the covenant of grace.

3. This covenant is absolute and "unconditional": the covenant of works is conditional: Adam, according to it, was to continue in that happy state in which he was created and put, while he obeyed the voice of God, and abstained from the forbidden fruit; but if he eat of that, he was to be stripped of his happiness, and die; the language of that covenant is, do this and live; if obedient to it, then blessing and life; but if disobedient, then cursing and death. The covenant God made with Abraham and his seed, concerning their having the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, was conditional; if willing and obedient, and so long as they behaved themselves well, according to the laws of God given them, they were to possess it, and enjoy the good things of it, (Isa. 1:19) but if otherwise, to be dispossessed of it; and accordingly, when they broke the laws of God, their neighbouring nations were let in upon them, and harassed and distressed them, or they were carried captive by them out of it; as, first by the Assyrians, then by the Chaldeans, and at last by the Romans; in which state they now are. But not such is the covenant of grace, that is without any conditions on the part of men. Some, indeed, make it to be a conditional covenant, and faith and repentance to be the conditions of it. But these are not conditions, but blessings of the covenant, and are as absolutely promised in it, as anything else; the promise of a "new heart", and of a "new spirit", includes the gift of faith, and every other grace; and that of taking away the "stony heart", and giving an "heart of flesh", is fully expressive of the gift of the grace of repentance, (Ezek. 36:26). Besides, if these were conditions of the covenant,

to be performed by men in their own strength, in order to be admitted into it, and receive the benefits of it; they would be as hard, and as difficult to be performed, as the condition of the covenant of works, perfect obedience; since faith requires, to the production of it, almighty power, even such as was put forth in raising Christ from the dead, (Eph. 1:19, 20) and though God may give men means, and time, and space of repentance, yet if he does not give them grace to repent, they never will. Christ's work, and the Spirit's grace, supersede all conditions in the covenant, respecting men; since they provide for everything that can be thought of, that is required or is wanting: Christ's work of redemption, atonement, and satisfaction for sin, as has been observed, is the only condition of the covenant; and that lies on the Mediator and Surety of the covenant, and not on the persons for whose sake it is made; "When thou shalt make his soul", or, "if his soul shall make an offering for sin", (Isa. 53:10) then such and such things are promised in the covenant, both to him and to his seed. Otherwise, the promises to them are absolute and unconditional, and run in this strain, I "will", and they "shall", without any "ifs" or conditions; as, I "will" be their God, and they "shall" be my people; I "will" put my law in their hearts; I "will" forgive their iniquities; they "shall" all know me, from the least to the greatest; I "will" put my fear in their hearts, that they "shall" not depart from me; I "will" sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye "shall" be clean; I "will" give you a new heart, and a new spirit, and an heart of flesh; and I "will" take away the stony heart, and I "will" put my Spirit within you, and "cause" you to walk in my statutes, and ye "shall" keep my judgments, and do them, (Jer. 31:33, 34, 32:38, 40; Ezek. 36:25-27). The blessings of the covenant are not suspended on any conditions to be performed; they do not wait for any, but take place without them. Redemption by Christ, the great article of the covenant, was not deferred on account of any condition to be performed by men; but Christ, in the fulness of time agreed on in covenant, when men were without strength to do anything, died for the ungodly; while they were yet sinners Christ died for them; and when enemies, they were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; and herein appeared the love of God; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins (Rom. 5:6, 8, 10; 1 John 4:10). Adoption takes place among men, who were not the people of God; and justification has for its objects the ungodly; and God forgives the iniquities of men, and remembers them no more, though they have done nothing to deserve it, but are guilty of the greatest ingratitude and unkindness; and regeneration finds men dead in trespasses and sins, foolish, disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures, without any previous dispositions or preparations in them for it (Hosea 1:10; Rom. 4:5; Isa. 43:25; Eph. 2:4, 5). 4.

The covenant of grace is "perfect" and complete, wanting nothing; it is "ordered in all things"; and if in all things, nothing can be wanting in it, (2 Sam. 23:5). It is full of precious promises; promises of all sorts, promises of things temporal, spiritual, and eternal; so that there is nothing that a believer stands in need of, nor any state nor condition he can come into, but there is a promise of what he wants, and which is suitable to him, (1 Tim. 4:8; Heb. 13:5, 6) it is full of rich blessings of grace; of all spiritual blessings, of blessings of goodness, which Christ, as Mediator, is made most blessed with; of goodness inconceivable and inexpressible, laid up in the covenant, and in the hands of Christ, for the covenant ones: it provides all things pertaining to life and godliness; for the implantation of life itself, and of every grace; for the beginning, carrying on, and finishing the work of grace on the heart; for the food, nourishment, support, and maintenance of the spiritual life in it; for the peace, joy, and comfort of believers; for grace, and spiritual strength to exercise grace, perform duties, bear and suffer all that they are called unto; for their perseverance in faith and holiness to the end; and for their eternal life and happiness; grace and glory are secured in this covenant; even "all salvation", the whole of it, and all the parts of it (2 Sam. 23:5). And it is so ordered, as to secure the spiritual and eternal welfare of God's elect, so to advance the glory of God, Father, Son, and Spirit; the Father is glorified in and by Christ the Mediator of it; and Christ is glorified by the Spirit, who takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to his people; and the Spirit is glorified by being the earnest, pledge, and seal of the heavenly inheritance (Isa. 49:3; John 16:14; Eph. 1:14). 5. It is an "holy" covenant; so it is called, (Luke 1:72) where God, by visiting and redeeming his people, and raising up an horn of salvation for them, or by sending Christ to be the Redeemer and Saviour of them, and to be his salvation to them, which is the grand article of the covenant of grace, is said by all this, "to remember his holy covenant". The contracting parties in this covenant are, the holy Father, and the holy Son, and the holy Spirit, with respect to whom this epithet is thrice expressed in (Isa. 6:3; Ps. 111:9) the matter of it is holy; the promises of it are holy, (Ps. 105:42) the blessings of it are holy; what are called the mercies of David, (Isa. 55:3) are called ἁ, the "holy" things of David, in (Acts 13:34) and nothing can more strongly engage to a concern for holiness of heart and life, than the promises of the covenant; (see 2 Cor. 6:18, 7:1) yea, the covenant provides fully for the sanctification of all the covenant ones; expressed by writing the laws of God in the hearts of them, putting his fear into them, giving them new hearts and new spirits, taking away the stony heart from them, and putting his own Spirit within them, to enable them to walk in his statutes, keep his judgments, and do them (Jer. 31:33, 32:39, 40; Ezek. 36:26, 27). 6. It

is a sure covenant, firm and immoveable, more immoveable than rocks and mountains; they may depart, but this covenant shall never depart, (2 Sam. 23:5; Isa. 54:10) it is "kept", or "observed", as the word rendered "sure", in the first of those places, signifies; it is kept inviolably by God that made it; hence he is sometimes described as a God "keeping covenant", (Neh. 9:32) his faithfulness, which he will never suffer to fail, is engaged to keep it, and therefore it is he will not break it, and men cannot, (Ps. 89:33, 34) it is secured by the oath of God, and the immutability of that; for as the counsel of God is confirmed by his oath, so is the covenant of God; for it follows in the place now referred to (Ps. 89:35). "Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David". And that is another reason why the covenant will not be broken; and why the word or promise that is gone out of his mouth shall not be altered. The covenant is also ratified and confirmed by the death of Christ, the Testator, as has been shown in a former chapter; whence the blood of Christ is called the blood of the covenant, which has sealed and confirmed it. The promises of the covenant are Yea and Amen in Christ; that is, sure and firm; and the blessings of it are the sure mercies of David, and the whole of it is confirmed in Christ (2 Cor. 1:20; Isa. 54:3; Gal. 3:17). 7. It is frequently called an "everlasting" covenant (2 Sam. 23:5; Isa. 54:3; Heb. 13:20). It is a covenant that will stand fast with Christ for ever, with whom it is made, and is what God has commanded for ever, and will be always fulfilling; the effects of it will be always seen and enjoyed, in time and to all eternity, (Ps. 89:28, 111:9). It is a covenant that will never be antiquated, nor give way to, nor be succeeded by another; the covenant of works is broken, and has been succeeded by an administration of the covenant of grace; and that first administration being not faultless, but deficient with respect to clearness and extensiveness, is waxen old, and vanished away, and has given place to a new administration of it; which will continue unto the end of the world, until all the covenant ones are gathered in: but though these two administrations differ in some things, as to some external circumstances and ordinances; yet the matter, sum, and substance of them is the same, even Christ, who is the same yesterday, today, and for ever: he is the foundation of the apostles and prophets, of Old and New Testament saints, who all partake of the same spiritual benefits and blessings, and of the same promises; and both are saved in the same way, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; even by the grace of the covenant, which is invariable and perpetual.

Chapter 16

OF THE COMPLACENCY AND DELIGHT GOD HAD IN HIMSELF, AND THE DIVINE PERSONS IN EACH OTHER,

BEFORE ANY CREATURE WAS BROUGHT INTO BEING

Having finished what I had to say concerning the internal acts of God, and the eternal transactions between the three divine Persons, before any creature, angel or man, was made; I should now have entered upon the external acts and works of God in time, but that I thought it might be proper, first, to observe the complacency, delight, and satisfaction God had in himself, in his own nature and perfections, before any creature existed; and would have had, if none had ever been brought into being: as also the pleasure he took in the fore views of his eternal purposes and decrees being executed in time; and of the success of those transactions, which were between the divine Persons in God, in the council of peace, and covenant of grace; and especially the mutual delight and complacency each divine Person had in one another, when alone, in a boundless eternity, and all of them had in the chosen vessels of salvation.

1. First, The complacency, delight, and satisfaction, which the divine Being had in himself, in his own nature and perfections, before the existence of any creature; and would have had the same if no creature had ever existed: in his nature, in the contemplation of the unspeakable glories of Deity, and in the special properties and mutual relations of the three persons to each other, and in the perfections of his nature. God is a most perfect being, entire and wanting nothing; he is El-shaddai, God all-sufficient, who has a sufficiency in and of himself, and needs nothing from creatures; he is the blessed one, God blessed for evermore; completely happy in himself, as has been proved, when his perfections were considered; whatever perfection or excellency is in creatures, angels or men, it is all from him, and is in him to the highest degree, and therefore as in them can add nothing to his pleasure and happiness: the perfections of God are indeed displayed in the creatures in a glorious manner; the heavens declare his glory, and the earth is full of it; but then these displays are made not for his own sake, but for the sake of others, that they may understand his eternal power and Godhead, or be left without excuse; and though his perfections are very brightly displayed herein, yet they are clearer in himself, and so can give him no new pleasure and satisfaction, nor add anything to his felicity and blessedness; for though it is said, "For thy pleasure they are and were created", (Rev. 4:11) "pleasure" there does not signify delight but will; and so it should be rendered by thy will, or according to it, "they are and were created"; and though when they were made, and he had reviewed them, they appeared to him all very good, and he expressed his well pleasedness in them; yet this raised no new joy in him, nor added anything to his happiness, complete in himself; which would have been the same if a creature, or any of the works of creation had never

been made, nor if any of the sons of men had ever been redeemed; for the benefit arising from the redemption of men by Christ, and the satisfaction made for them by him, redounds not to God, but to the redeemed, and for whom the satisfaction is made; "My goodness extendeth not to thee", says Christ, "but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my delight", (Ps. 16:2, 3) nor does he need the worship and obedience of angels or men; nor does he receive any additional pleasure and happiness from them; what are the highest and loudest praises of angels, to him who is exalted above all blessing and praise? Or the prayers and petitions of indigent creatures? The benefit from them is to them, and not to him; what is all the righteousness, and what are the best works done by men to him? "Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? Or is it gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? Or what receiveth he of thine hand? Can a man by all this be profitable to God?" No, he cannot; when the best of men have done all they can, they must own they are but "unprofitable servants", with respect to him. "Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again; for of him, and through, him, and to him are all things?" (Job 22:2, 3, 35:7; Luke 17:10; Rom. 11:35, 36). Since then nothing in time, in and from creatures, add anything to the essential glory, bliss, and happiness of the divine Being; it clearly appears, that his going forth in the works of creation, did not arise from necessity of nature, but was according to his sovereign will; and that he had infinite delight, pleasure, and complacency in himself, before any creature was made, and would have had the same, if they had never been.

2. Secondly, As Jehovah took delight and pleasure in himself, in his own nature, and the perfections of it, so in the internal and eternal acts of his mind; his purposes and decrees, formed in his eternal mind, according to the good pleasure of his will; these concern all things done in time, from the beginning to the end of the world; the formation of the heaven, earth, and sea, and all that are in them; everything that has been, is, or shall be, since the world began to the consummation of all things; for there is a purpose for everything under heaven, and a time for every purpose (Eccl. 3:1). And these all lay before God, at once and together, in his all-comprehending mind; he saw the end from the beginning, and every intervening thing; "Known unto God are all his works from eternity", (Acts 15:18) and he delighted in them, as he saw them in himself, in his mind and will, and in the fore views of the accomplishment of them in time; who calls things that are not, as though they were; they stood all before him in his view, as if really in execution; nor does the execution of them add any new joy and pleasure to him: particularly all those purposes and resolutions of his mind, concerning

the redemption, conversion, and salvation of his chosen ones, and the state and condition of his church, in all the periods of time, were viewed within himself, with the utmost delight and pleasure; the plan of their peace and reconciliation, drawn in the council of peace, and everything respecting their salvation, settled in the covenant of grace. These transactions gave him infinite pleasure and satisfaction; and on these his thoughts have ran ever since, with the utmost delight, in the fore views of all things, taking place in time and to eternity, according to these ancient settlements. But what I would chiefly attend unto is,

3. Thirdly, The delight and complacency which each divine Person had in one another, before any creature was in being; with respect to two of the divine Persons, this is strongly expressed in Proverbs 8:30. "Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him": when all this was, may be learned from the preceding verses; when there were no depths, no fountains abounding with water; before the mountains were settled, while as yet he had not made the earth, &c. (Prov. 8:24-29) and the third Person is not to be excluded.

3a. First, The delight and complacency of the Father in the Son, is declared in the following expressions; which are borrowed from the delight and pleasure parents take in their children; being "by" them, "brought up" with them, "nursed" up by them, "playing" before them; which must be understood with a decency becoming the divine Persons, and not be strained beyond their general design, which is to express the mutual delight of the Father and the Son in each other: "Then I was by him", from eternity, or before the world was; I, a person, as the pronoun is expressive of; not a nature, not the human nature of Christ, which is no person; and still less a part of it, the soul of Christ, which then had no existence; but I, a divine Person, the eternal "Logos", the Word and Wisdom of God, who is all along speaking from Proverbs 8:12. "I Wisdom", &c. To this very passage, the same with the Word John speaks of, and much in the same language (John 1:1). "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"; to which Word he ascribes the creation of all things, and therefore must be before thine, as well as be a divine Person; and he is in both places represented as a distinct Person, as he must be, from him, by whom, and with whom, he was a Person eternally existing; being not only before Abraham, but before Adam, or any creature was in being; a Person co-existing, as a Son with the Father, being co- essential and co-eternal with his Father; and was by him, and at his side, on a level with him; Jehovah's fellow, equal to him, possessed of the same perfections; and being by him, and in his presence, was infinitely delighted in by him; and was "as one brought up with him", as

a Son with a Father, and so denotes his relation to him, being begotten of him, his own Son, the Son of the Father, in truth and love; and the Father's tender regard of him, and delight in him; being, as some render the word, "nursed up" by him, and carried in his bosom, as a nursing Father bears the sucking child; so to express the exceeding great tenderness of the Father to the Son, and his delight in him, the only begotten Son, he is said to be "in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18.) Though the phrase may also have respect to Christ, in his mediatorial capacity, who was foreordained and constituted as Mediator by his Father, and trained up in his office, and to whom he pointed out the work he was to do as such; to bring Jacob again, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved of Israel; and be his salvation unto the ends of the earth (Isa. 49:5, 6). "And I was daily his delight"; day by day, or every day; not that there are, properly speaking, days in eternity; but the phrase is expressive of the constant and invariable delight the Father had in his Son; as well as the greatness of it is signified by the word in the plural number, "delights"; he was his exceeding great delight, superlatively delightful to him; and so he was, as he was his Son, a Son of delights, the dear Son of his love; whom he loved before the foundation of the world, with a love of complacency and delight; he was always his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased; partly because of his likeness to him, being the image of the invisible God, the express image of his Person; as every like loves its like; and partly because of the same nature with him, having the same perfections, even the whole fulness of the Godhead in him: he was also his delight, considered in his office as Mediator; "Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth" (Isa. 42:1). He delighted in him, as engaging in covenant to be the Mediator and Surety of it; as with admiration, so with the utmost pleasure and delight, he said, "Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?" (Jer. 30:21) to strike hands with me, and become a Surety for my people. And with equal pleasure did he behold him acceding and assenting to his proposals in covenant, saying, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God!" (Ps. 40:7, 8). He delighted in him as the God-man; being fit, as such, for the work he assigned unto him; and whereas he proposed to him in covenant, to assume human nature in time, for that purpose, and he agreed unto it, he viewed him henceforward as the God-man; and he bore the repute of it with him, and considered him under this character; he delighted in the fore views of his future assumption of human nature; and a little before the time, by Zechariah, one of the last of the prophets, expressed his joy at the near approach of it; "Behold, I will bring forth my Servant, the Branch"; that is, speedily, in a very short time; and again, "Behold the Man, whose name is the Branch, he shall grow up out

of his place", (Zech. 3:8, 6:12) which is signified to be future, yet near. And he delighted in the fore views of that obedience to his will his Son should yield in that nature, by which the law would be magnified and made honourable; and of his sufferings and death in it, whereby full satisfaction would be given for the sins of his people; and of his glorification at his right hand in that nature he had promised him; and of his own glory displayed in the salvation of men by him, and a full accomplishment of that; an affair his heart was so much set upon from everlasting. In the fore views of all this was Christ as Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour, as well as God's own Son, the object of his infinite delight and pleasure from everlasting.

3b. Secondly, The Son of God also had the same delight and pleasure in his divine Father, before the world was; and when there was no creature in being, he was then "rejoicing always before him"; rejoicing in being possessed of the same nature and perfections his Father was, being like and equal to him in all things; and rejoicing that he stood in such a relation to him as a Son to a Father; with what exultation does he repeat the words of his Father to him, declaring this relation; "The Lord hath said unto me", and that was in eternity, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee" (Ps. 2:7). He delighted in the fore views of his future incarnation, as being agreeable to his Father's will; "A body hast thou prepared me", (Heb. 10:5) which he spoke with pleasure, and as being willing and desirous to assume it; in which he should do his Father's will and work, and which would be his meat and drink, and accomplish the salvation of his people, which was the "joy set before him"; and he rejoiced in the fore views of his Father being glorified by it, and of his own glory upon it (John 13:31, 32, 17:1, 4, 5).

3c. Thirdly, Though the third Person, the Holy Spirit, is not mentioned in the passage in Proverbs; yet as the Father delights in the Son, and the Son in the Father, so both of them delight in the Spirit, as proceeding from them, and he in them; for these Three are One, of the same nature and perfections, and have a mutual in being in each other, and so a complacency in one another; for as the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father, (John 10:38, 14:10) so the Spirit is in them, and they in him; and in consequence must have a mutual delight in each other: the Spirit, as he is of the same nature with the Father and the Son, always took infinite delight in his own nature and perfections; and as he was privy to all the thoughts, purposes, and counsels of God, which are the deep things he searches and reveals; he must have taken pleasure in them, and in the fore views of the execution of them; and as he approved and assented to all the articles in the council and covenant of peace, he must have had infinite delight in the view of the accomplishment of them, as well as of those things which he himself in

covenant undertook to perform.

3d. Fourthly, This mutual delight and complacency which each Person had in one another, lay in and arose from the perfect knowledge they had of each other; "As the Father knoweth me", says Christ, "so know I the Father", (John 10:15) and the Spirit knows them both, and the things that are in them, (1 Cor. 2:10, 11) and hence arises mutual love to each other; the Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the Father, (John 3:35, 5:20, 14:31) and the Spirit proceeding from them both, loves them both; and it cannot be otherwise, since there is such a nearness to, and mutual in being in each other. Moreover, 4. Fourthly, The three divine Persons had from eternity, and before any creature was in actual being, the utmost delight and complacency in the elect of God, and in the fore views of their salvation and happiness. The joy and delight of the Son in them are strongly expressed in Proverbs 8:31. "Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men"; that is, from everlasting; before ever the earth was made, or any creature in it; then was the Son of God "rejoicing in the habitable part of the earth"; in the fore views of those spots of ground, houses, and cottages, where it was known the chosen vessels of mercy would dwell: for God has "determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation"; and Christ knew beforehand in what places he should have a people, and in which this and that man should be born again, (Acts 17:26, 18:10; Ps. 87:4-6) and as lovers express their love to the objects of their love, by saying they love the ground on which they tread; so Christ having loved his people with a love of complacency and delight, rejoiced in the foresight of those parts of the habitable world, where he saw their habitations would be: the church of God on earth may be called the habitable part of his earth, being the dwelling place which he has chosen for himself as such, and where he delights to dwell, and they were from everlasting his Hephzibah and Beulah. Some respect may be had to the new earth, or the second Adam's earth; in which only righteous persons will dwell; and where the tabernacle of God will be with men, his chosen ones; and where he will dwell with them a thousand years; and in this also the Son of God was rejoicing in the fore views of: nor am I averse to take in the human nature of Christ, into the sense of the words; who though with respect to his divine Person, and mediatorial office, is the Lord from heaven; yet, as to his human nature, he was "curiously wrought", by the power and skill of the Holy Ghost, "in the lowest parts of the earth", in the womb of the Virgin, and therefore called "the fruit of the earth", being born of an earthly woman, (Ps. 139:15; Isa. 4:2) and which human nature is a tabernacle God pitched, and not men; a tabernacle for the eternal Word to dwell in, and where the fulness of the

Godhead dwells bodily; and in the views of this the Son of God was rejoicing before the world was; and in time expressed his desire of it, and delight in it, before it became his habitation; as may be concluded from his frequent appearances in an human form, before his incarnation, as forshadowing it; as to Adam, Abraham, Jacob, and other patriarchs; he rejoiced in the fore views of it, as it would be of the same kind with that of the children given him, and he had undertook to redeem and save; and as it would be the produce of the holy Spirit, and so free from sin; and as it would be filled and adorned with his gifts and graces; and as after he had done the will of God in it, it would he crowned with glory and honour, and set down at the right hand of God: and all this joy and delight were with a peculiar respect unto the elect of God, as follows; "And my delights were with the sons of men", the posterity of Adam, fallen creatures, the chosen of God among them, who sinned in him, and on whom judgment came unto condemnation, and who are conceived and born in sin, and are by nature children of wrath as others; and yet the delights of Christ, his exceeding great delight, expressed by the plural number, were with them as they were loved by his Father, chosen in him, and given to him; and as he viewed them redeemed by him, washed in his blood, and clothed with his righteousness; and as he saw them in the glass of his Father's purposes and decrees, in all the glory he designed to bring them to, even to be a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. Now not only the Son of God took delight and complacency in the elect of God, before the world was; but the Father and Spirit also; for God the Father of Christ loved them, and chose them in him, before the foundation of the world, (2 Thess. 2:13; Eph. 1:4). And this love was a love of complacency and delight; because he delighted in them, therefore he chose them to be his peculiar people, as he did Israel of old, in a national sense (Deut. 10:15). And from the same delight in them arose the council held by him with the other two Persons concerning them; and the covenant of grace he entered into with them. And so the Holy Spirit, his delights were with the same Persons, as they were chosen in Christ, through sanctification by him; and in the fore views of their being temples for him to dwell in; and in whom he should abide as the earnest and pledge of their future glory; and as the sealer of them to the day of redemption; and as they should be sanctified and made meet by him for eternal glory and happiness. Thus we see what delight and complacency, satisfaction and happiness, God had in himself before any creature existed; and would have continued the same, if none had ever been created: so that he needed not for his own sake, to go forth in acts of power, to bring creatures into being, since he would have been as happy without them as with them; wherefore the production of them into being is purely

the effect of his sovereign will and pleasure; and we see what the thoughts of God were employed about, and chiefly concerned in, in eternity; and the whole furnishes an answer to those curious questions, if it is proper to make them; What was God doing in eternity? What did his thoughts chiefly run upon then? And wherein lay his satisfaction, delight, and happiness?

Book III
OF THE EXTERNAL WORKS OF GOD

Chapter 1
OF CREATION IN GENERAL

Having considered the internal and eternal acts of the divine mind, and the transactions of the divine Persons with each other in eternity; I proceed to consider the external acts and works of God, or his goings forth out of himself, in the exercise of his power and goodness in the works of creation, providence, redemption, and grace; which works of God, without himself, in time, are agreeable to the acts of his mind within himself, in eternity. These are no other than his eternal purposes and decrees carried into execution; for "he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. 1:11). I shall begin with the work of creation, which is what God himself began with; and shall consider the following things concerning it.

1. What creation is. Sometimes it only signifies the natural production of creatures into being, in the ordinary way, by generation and propagation; so the birth of persons, or the bringing them into being, in the common course of nature, is called the creation of them, and God is represented as their Creator (Ezek. 21:30; 28:14; Eccl. 12:1). Sometimes it designs acts of providence, in bringing about affairs of moment and importance in the world; as when it is said, "I form the light, and create darkness"; which is explained by what follows, "I make peace and create evil": it is to be understood of prosperous and adverse dispensations of providence; which are the Lord's doings, and are according to his sovereign will and pleasure (Isa. 55:7). So the renewing of the face of the earth, and the reproduction of herbs, plants, &c. In the returning spring of the year, is called a creation of them (Ps. 104:30). And the renewing of the world, in the end of time, though the substance of it will remain, is called a creating new heavens and a new earth, (Isa. 65:17). Sometimes it intends the doing something unusual, extraordinary, and wonderful; such as the earth's opening its mouth, and swallowing up the rebellious Israelites in the wilderness (Num. 16:30), and the wonderful protection of the church of God (Isa. 4:5), and particularly the amazing incarnation of the Son of God (Jer. 31:22). But, to observe no

more, creation may be distinguished into mediate and immediate; mediate creation is the production of beings, by the power of God, out of pre-existent matter, which of itself was not disposed to produce them; so God is said to create great whales and other fishes, which, at his command, the waters brought forth abundantly; and he created man, male and female; and yet man, as to his body, was made of the dust of the earth, and the woman out of the rib of man (Gen. 1:21,27), and, indeed, all that was created on the five last days of the creation, was made by the all-commanding power and will of God, out of matter which before existed, though indisposed of itself for such a production. Immediate creation, and which is properly creation, is the production of things out of thing, or the bringing of a nonentity into being, as was the work of the first day, the creating the heavens and the earth, the unformed chaos, and the light commanded to arise upon it (Gen. 1:1-3). And these are the original of all things; so that all things ultimately are made out of nothing, which is the voice of divine revelation, and our faith is directed to assent unto and receive; "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb 11:3), but of things unseen, and indeed, which had no existence; for God, by his all-commanding word and power, "called things that are not as though they were" (Rom. 4:17), that is, called and commanded by his mighty power, nonentities into being; and this is what is meant by a creation of things out of nothing; and so the word ברא, used for the making of the heavens and the earth in the beginning, signifies, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi observe; and indeed it cannot be conceived of otherwise, but that the world was made out of nothing; for,

If nothing existed from eternity but God, or if nothing existed before the world was but himself, by which his eternity is described, and which he claims as peculiar to himself (Ps.. 90:2; Isa. 43:10), and if the world was made by him, as it most certainly was, it must be made by him out of nothing, since besides himself, there was nothing existing, out of which it could be made; to say it was made out of pre-existent matter, is to beg the question; besides, that pre-existent matter must be made by him; for he has "created all things", (Rev. 4:11 and if all things, nothing can be excepted; and certainly not matter; for be that visible or invisible, one of them it must be; and both the one and the other are created of God (Col. 1:16), and this matter must be made out of nothing, so that it comes to the same thing, that all things are originally made out of nothing. Besides, there are some creatures, and those the most noble, as angels and the souls of men, which are immaterial, and therefore are not made out of matter, and consequently are made out of nothing; and are brought from nonentity into being, by the almighty power

of God; and if these, why not others? And if these and others, why not all things, even matter itself? As for that old and trite maxim, so much in the mouths of the ancient philosophers, as well as modern reasoners, "Ex nihilo nihil fit", out of nothing, nothing is made; this only holds true of finite nature, finite beings, second causes; by them out of nothing, nothing can be made; but not of infinite nature, of the infinite Being, the first Cause, who is a God of infinite perfection and power; and what is it that omnipotence cannot do? Plato owns that God is the Cause, or Author of those things, which before were not in being, or created all things out of nothing.

II. The object of creation, all things, nothing excepted in the whole compass of finite nature; "Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure", or by thy will, "they are and were created" (Rev. 4:11), these all things are comprehended by Moses under the name of the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1:1), and more fully expressed by the apostles in their address to God, who is described by them as having "made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is" (Acts 4:24), and still more explicitly by the angel, who swore by the living God "who created heaven, and the things that therein are; and the earth, and the things that therein are; and the sea, and the things which are therein" (Rev. 10:6).

First, The heavens and all in them; these are often represented as made and created by God, and are said to be the work of his fingers and of his hands; being curiously as well as powerfully wrought by him (Ps.. 8:3; 19:1; 102:25). They are spoken of in the plural number, for there are more heavens than one; there are certainly three, for we read of a "third" heaven, which is explained of "paradise" (2 Cor. 12:2,4), this is,

l. The heaven of heavens, the superior heaven, and the most excellent, the habitation of God, where his glorious presence is, where he has his palace, keeps his court, and is indeed his throne (Isa. 65:15; 66:1), and where angels dwell, and therefore they are called the angels of heaven, are in the presence of God there, and behold the face of our heavenly Father (Matthew 24:36; 18:10), and where glorified saints will be in soul and body to all eternity. Now this is a place made and created by God, and as such cannot contain him, though his glory is greatly manifested in it, (1 Kings 8:27), it is where the angels are, who must have an "בְּ" somewhere to be in, being finite creatures, and who are said to ascend unto, and descend from thence (John 1:51), and here bodies are, which require space and place, as those of "Enoch" and "Elijah", translated thither, and the human nature of Christ, which has ascended to it, and will be retained in it, until his second coming; and where the bodies of those are, who rose at the time of his resurrection; as well as all the bodies of the saints will be to all eternity: and this is expressly called a

"place" by Christ, and is distinguished as the place of the blessed, from that of the damned (John 14:2,3; Luke 16:26), and is sometimes described by an house, a city, a country, kingdom, and an inheritance; and particularly it is called a "city whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10), for he that built all things built this; it is a part of his creation; and all things in it are created by him; he the uncreated Being excepted; even God, Father, Son, and Spirit; but the angels of it are his creatures; "He makes his angels spirits" (Ps. 104:4), of their creation, and the time of it, of their nature, number, excellency, and usefulness, I shall treat in a particular chapter hereafter.

2. There is another heaven, lower than the former, and may be called the "second", and bears the name of the starry heaven, because the sun, and moon, and stars are placed in it; "Look towards heaven, and tell the stars", (Gen. 15:5; Isa. 40:26; Job 22:12), this reaches from the region of the moon to the place of the fixed stars, and to that immense space which our eyes cannot reach. Now this, and all that in it are, were created by God; he made the sun to rule by day, and the moon to rule by night; and he made the stars also (Gen. 1:16).

3. There is another heaven lower than both the former, and may be called the aerial heaven; for the air and heaven are sometime synonymous; hence the fowls are sometimes called the fowls of the heaven, and sometimes the fowls of the air, they being the same (Gen. 7:3,23). Now this wide expanse, or firmament of heaven, is the handy-work of God, and all things in it; not only the fowls that fly in it, but all the meteors gendered there; as rain, hail, snow, thunder, and lightning. "Hath the rain a father?" None but God; and the same may be said of all the rest: (Job 37:6; 38:28,29).

Secondly, The earth, and all that is therein. This was first made without form; not without any, but without the beautiful one in which it quickly appeared; and when the waters were drained off from it, and became dry land, it was called earth (Gen. 1:2,9,10) and as this was made by God, so all things in it; the grass, the herbs, the plants, and trees upon it; the metals and minerals in the bowels of it, gold, silver, brass, and iron; all the beasts of the field, and "the cattle on a thousand hills"; as well as the principal inhabitants of it, men, called eminently the inhabitants of the earth (Dan. 4:35). Of the creation of man I shall treat in a distinct chapter by itself.

Thirdly, The sea, and all that is in that; when God cleaved an hollow in the earth, the waters he drained off of it, he gathered into it; and gave those waters, thus gathered into one place, the name of seas (Gen. 1:10), and which were of his creating; "The sea is his, and he made it", (Ps. 95:5 and all in it: likewise the marine plants and trees, with other things therein; and all the fishes which swim in it, great and small, innumerable (Ps. 104:25,26).

Now these, the heavens, earth, and sea, and all that are in them, make up the world which God has created, and which is but one; for though we read of worlds, God has made by his Son, and which are framed by the word of God (Heb. 1:2; 11:3), yet these may have respect only to the distinction of the upper, middle, and lower world; for the numerous worlds some Jewish writers speak of, they are mere fables; and that the planets are so many worlds as our earth is, and that the fixed stars are so many suns to worlds unknown by us, are the conjectures of modern astronomers, and in which there is no certainty; revelation gives no account of them, and we have no concern with them; and were there as many as are imagined, and can be conceived of, this we may be assured of, they were all created by God.

III. The next thing to be inquired into is, When creation began? Or God began to create and bring things into being? And this was not in eternity, but in time; an "eternal creature", or a creature in eternity, is the greatest absurdity imaginable; to assert it is an insult on the common sense and understanding of men: it was in the beginning of time, or when time first began, as it did, when a creature was first made, that God made all things; "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). "And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth", &c. (Heb 1:10), these were the first that were created, and with these time begun; and every creature has a beginning, creation supposes it; for that is no other than bringing a nonentity into being; and therefore since what is created, once was not, it must have a beginning. Some philosophers, and Aristotle at the head of them, have asserted the eternity of the world; but without any reason; and is abundantly refuted by scripture; and therefore cannot be received by those that believe its divine authority; for that not only assures us that it was created in the beginning, and so had a beginning; but gives us an account of what was before it; as, that before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and world were formed, God was, even from everlasting; so that an eternity anteceded the making of the world. Christ also, the Wisdom and Word of God, was before the earth was; even when there were no depths, nor fountains abounding with water; before the mountains and hills were settled, and the highest part of the world made (Ps. 90:2; Prov. 8:24-30). A choice of men was made in Christ unto eternal life, before the foundation of the world; and grace was given to them in him, as their head and representative, before the world began, (Eph. 1:4; 2 Tim. 1:9). A full proof that the world had a beginning; and that there were things done in eternity, before the world was in being. To say the world, or matter, was co-eternal with God, is to make that itself God; for eternity is a perfection peculiar to God; and where one perfection is, all are: what is eternal, is infinite and

unbounded; and if the world is eternal, it is infinite; and then there must be two infinites, which is an absurdity not to be received. Besides, if eternal, it must necessarily exist; or exist by necessity of nature; and so be self-existent, and consequently God; yea, must be independent of him, and to which he can have no claim, nor any power and authority over it; whereas, according to divine revelation, and even the reason of things, all things were according to the pleasure of God, or by his will (Rev. 4:11), and therefore must be later than his will, being the effect of it.

And as the world had a beginning, and all things in it, it does not appear to be of any great antiquity; it has not, as yet, run out six thousand years, according to the scriptural account, and which may be depended on. Indeed, according to the Greek version, the age of the world is carried fourteen or fifteen hundred years higher; but the Hebrew text is the surest rule to go by: as for the accounts of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Chinese, which make the original of their kingdoms and states many thousands of years higher still; these are only vain boasts, and fabulous relations, which have no foundation in true history. The origin of nations, according to the Scriptures, which appears to be the truest; and the invention of arts and sciences, and of various things necessary to human life; as of agriculture, the bringing up of cattle; making of various utensils of brass and iron, for the various businesses of life; and the finding out of letters; with many other things, which appear to be within the time the Scripture assigns for the creation; plainly show it could not be earlier, since without these men could not be long: nor does any genuine history give an account of anything more early, nor so early as the Scriptures do; and therefore we may safely conclude, that the origin of the world, as given by that, is true; for if the world had been eternal, or of so early a date as some kingdoms pretend unto, something or other done in those ancient times, would have been, some way or another, transmitted to posterity.

Under this head might be considered, the time and season of the year when the world was created. Some think it was in the vernal equinox, or spring of the year, when plants and trees are blooming, look beautiful, and all nature is gay and pleasant; and at which season in every year, there is a renewing of the face of the earth: and some have observed, in favour of this notion, that the redemption of man was wrought out at this time of the year, which is a restoration of the world; but these seem not sufficient to ascertain it. Others think the world was created in the autumnal equinox, when the fruits of the earth are ripe, and in their full perfection; which seems more probable: and certain it is, that some nations of old, as the Egyptians and others, began their year at this time; as did the Israelites, before their coming

out of Egypt, when they were ordered by the Lord to make a change; and from thenceforward to reckon the month Abib, or Nisan, in which they came out of Egypt, the first month of the year, and which answers to part of March and part of April; and which they always observed for the regulation of their ecclesiastic affairs, though with respect to civil matters, they still continued to reckon the year from Tisri, which answers to some part of our September; and it may be observed, that the feast of in gathering the fruits of the earth, is said to be "in the end of the year"; and when a new year begun; (see Ex. 12:2; 23:16). But this is a matter of no great moment, which way soever it is determined; what follows is of more importance.

IV. The author of creation is God, and he only; hence he is called the creator of the ends of the earth, of the whole world, to the utmost bounds of it; and claims the making the heavens and the earth to himself alone; and a curse is pronounced on those deities that made not the heavens and the earth; and it is declared, that they should perish from the earth, and from under those heavens (Isa. 40:28; 42:5; 44:24; Jer. 10:11), and more divine persons than one were concerned in this work, for we read of creators and makers in the plural number (Eccl. 12:1; Job 35:10; Ps. 149:2; Isa. 54:5), and a plural word for God is made use of at the first mention of the creation (Gen. 1:1), and these divine persons are Father, Son, and Spirit, the one only living and true God; of the Father of Christ there can be no doubt; our Lord addresses his Father as Lord of heaven and earth, the possessor and governor of both, being the creator of them (Matthew 11:25), and the apostles expressly ascribe to him the making of the heavens, earth, and sea, and all that is in them (Acts 4:24,27), and he is said to make the worlds by his Son, and to create all things by Jesus Christ, (Heb. 1:2; Eph. 3:9), not by him as an instrument, but as a co-efficient cause; for the particle "by" does not always signify an instrument; (see Rom. 11:36), besides, it is expressly said of the Word and Son of God, who is God, that "all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that is made"; and of him, the image of the invisible God and firstborn, or first parent and producer of every creature, that "all things were created by him, and for him"; by him as the first cause, and for him as the chief end (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:15,16), and the Son is addressed by his divine Father after this manner, "And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands"; and by him, the eternal Logos, the essential Word of God, the worlds are said to be framed (Heb. 1:8-10; 11:3), nor is the Holy Spirit to be excluded from having a concern in the works of creation; since he not only moved upon the face of the waters at the first creation, and brought the unformed earth into a beautiful order, and by him the heavens

were garnished, and bespangled with luminaries (Gen. 1:2; Job 26:13), but the formation of men is ascribed to him, "The Spirit of God hath made me, saith Elihu, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life" (Job 33:4), and since the Spirit of God is the author of regeneration, which is a re-creation, or a new creation, and which requires the same almighty power to effect it, as the old creation did; and since he is the giver of all grace, and of every spiritual gift, which he dispenses to everyone severally as he will; no doubt ought to be made of it, that he had an hand in the creation of all things.

And this work of creation was wrought by God, Father, Son, and Spirit, without any other cause, principal or instrumental; not principal, for then that would be equal with God; nor instrumental, since creation is a production of things out of nothing, there was nothing for an instrument to operate upon; and since it was an instantaneous action, done in a moment, there could be no opportunity of using and employing one: besides, this instrument must be either God or a creature; not God, because it is supposed to be distinct from him, and to be made use of by him; and if a creature, it must be used in the creation of itself, which is an absurdity; for then it must be and not be at the same moment: nor could nor can creative power be communicated to a creature; this would be to make finite infinite, and so another God, which cannot be; this would be to make God to act contrary to his nature, to deny himself, which he cannot do; and to destroy all distinction between the creature and the Creator, and to introduce and justify the idolatry of the heathens, who worshipped the creature besides the Creator.

V. The manner and order of the creation; it was done at once by the mighty power of God, by his all-commanding will and word, "He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast" (Ps. 33:9), he gave the word, and every creature started into being in a moment; for though God took six days for the creation of the world and all things in it, to make his works the more observable, and that they might be distinctly considered, and gradually become the object of contemplation and wonder; yet the work of every day, and every particular work in each day, were done in a moment, without any motion and change, without any labour and fatigue, only by a word speaking, by an almighty "fiat", let it be done, and it immediately was done; thus on the "first" day, by the word of the Lord the heavens and the earth were at once made, and light was called into being, "Let there be light, and there was light". On the "second" day the firmament of heaven, the great expanse, was formed in the same manner, to divide the waters above it, gathered up and formed into clouds, from those that were under it upon the surface of the earth; and on the "third" day, in one moment of that day, God ordered the waters under the heavens to be gathered into one place called the

sea, and leave the land dry, which he called earth; and in another moment of that day he commanded the earth to bring forth grass, herbs, and trees, and they sprung up at once. On the "fourth" day he made the sun, moon, and stars in an instant, and directed their several uses; on the "fifth" day, in one moment of it, he bid the water bring forth fowls, and in another moment of it created great whales, and the numerous fishes of the sea; and on the "sixth" day, in one moment of it, he ordered the earth to bring forth living creatures, beasts, and cattle, wild and tame; and in another moment on the same day he created man after his image, his soul immaterial out of nothing, his body out of the dust of the earth; and in another moment on the same day created the woman out of the rib of man, immediately infusing into her a rational soul as into man, since both were made after the image of God; and thus God proceeded in the creation of things in the visible world, from things less perfect to those more perfect, and from inanimate creatures to animate ones, and from irrational creatures to rational ones; and in his great wisdom provided food and habitations for living creatures before he made them; and when he had finished his works he overlooked them and pronounced them all very good. Nor is it any objection to the goodness of them that some creatures are noxious and harmful to men, since they become so through the sin of men; and others are of a poisonous nature, since even these may be good and useful to others; and God has given man capacity and sagacity to distinguish between what may be harmful to him, and what is salutary. There remains nothing more to be observed but,

VI. The end of the creation of all things: and,

1. The ultimate end is the glory of God: "The Lord hath made", in every sense, "all things for himself"; that is, for his glory (Prov. 16:4), and his glory is displayed in all, the heavens declare it, and the earth is full of it, even the glory of all the divine perfections; "for the invisible things of him", his nature, perfections, and attributes, "from the creation of the world", or by the works of creation, "are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made", which could never be made without them, "even his eternal power and Godhead"; all the perfections of deity, particularly his infinite and almighty power (Rom. 1:20), for as the prophet Jeremiah says, "Lord God, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm" (Jer. 32:17), moreover the goodness of God is remarkably displayed in the creation; God appears therein to be communicative of his goodness, since he has not only made all things very good, but all conducive to the good of his creatures; the whole earth is full of his goodness; and men are called upon by the Psalmist to give thanks to God because he is good; and the principal things instanced in, in which his goodness appears, are the

works of creation; (see Ps. 33:5; 136:1,4), &c. To all which may be added, the rich display that is made of the wisdom of God in the several parts of the creation; "The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth, by understanding hath he established the heavens, by his knowledge the depths are broken up" (Prov. 3:19,20). The wisdom of God appears in every creature he has made, in their form, shape, texture, and nature, suitable for what they are designed, and in their subserviency to each other, so that the Psalmist well might say, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all!" (Ps. 104:24).

2. The subordinate end is the good of man, of men in general; the earth is made to be inhabited by man, and all the creatures on it are put in subjection to him, and are for his use and service, as well as all that grows upon it, or are in the bowels of it (Isa. 45:12,18; Ps. 8:6-8), the celestial bodies, the sun, moon, and stars, and all the influences of the heavens, are for his benefit (Gen. 1:14-18; Hosea 2:21,22), particularly the world, and all things were made for the sake of God's chosen people, who in the several ages of time were to be brought forth and appear on it; and in which, as on a stage and theatre, the great work of their redemption and salvation was to be performed in the most public manner; and they have the best title to the world, even the present world, Christ being theirs, whose is the world and the fullness of it (1 Cor. 3:22,23; Ps. 24:1), as well as the new heavens and the new earth, as they will be when refined and purified, the second Adam's world, are for their sakes; and in which none but righteous persons will dwell, even the whole church of God, when prepared as a bride for her husband, and where the tabernacle of God will be with men. 2 Peter 3:13 and Revelation 21:1-4, yea the angels of heaven are created for their use and service; they are all "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who are heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1:14), wherefore upon the whole it becomes us to glorify and worship God our creator, to fear him and stand in awe of him, and to put our trust and confidence in him, both for things temporal and spiritual.

Chapter 2

OF THE CREATION OF ANGELS

From considering the creation in general, I descend to particulars; not to all the creatures that are made; to treat of the nature, form, figure, and qualities of every creature in heaven, earth, and sea, would be a work too large and tedious, and what belongs to naturalists and philosophers, and not divines: I shall only consider angels, the chief of God's works in the heavens; and man, the principal of his creatures on earth. And begin with the angels.

Though the creation of angels is not expressly mentioned in the account

of the creation by Moses, yet it is implied in it; for the heavens include all that are in them; which are said to be created by God; and among these must be the angels: besides, Moses, in closing the account of the creation, observes, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them" (Gen. 2:1). Now of the hosts of heaven, the angels are the principal part; they are expressly called, the heavenly host, and the armies of heaven (Dan. 4:35; Luke 2:13), and therefore must have been created within the six days of the creation; though on what particular day is not certain, whether on the first, second, third, or fourth; all have been pitched upon by one or another; most probably the first, on which day the heavens were created; and that first, and then the earth; so that the angels might be created with the heavens, whose nature is most similar to the heavens, and the heavens the habitation of them; and accordingly might be present at the forming and founding of the earth, on the same day, and sing on that occasion (Job 38:7), which if the sense of that text, the time of their creation is plainly pointed out by it; for though they were created very early, some time within the creation of the six days, since some of them fell before man did; and one of the apostate angels was concerned in the seduction of our first parents, and was the instrument of their fall and ruin, quickly after their creation; yet they were not created before the world was, as some have fancied, and which is a mere fancy; for there was nothing before the world was, but the supreme Being, the Creator of all things; "Before the world was", is a phrase expressive of eternity, and that is peculiar to God, and whose eternity is expressed by the same phrase; "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world; even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God" (Ps 90:2). Besides though angels have not bodies, and so are not in place circumscriptively; yet, as they are creatures, they must have an "בְּ", a somewhere, in which they are definitively; so that they are here, and not there, and much less every where: now where was there an "בְּ", a somewhere, for them to exist in, before the heavens and the earth were made? It is most reasonable therefore to conclude, that as God prepared an habitation for all the living creatures before he made them; as the sea for the fishes; the expanse, or air, for the fowls; and the earth for men and beasts; so he made the heavens first, and then the angels to dwell in them: and these were made all at once and together; not like their kindred, the souls or spirits of men, which are made one by one, as their bodies are; for they are created, not without them, but in them, by God, "who formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zech. 12:1). But the angelic spirits were made altogether; for "all" those morning stars, the sons of God, were present, and shouted at the foundation of the earth; and all the host of heaven, which

must be understood chiefly of angels, were made by the breath of God, when the heavens were created by his word (Job 38:7; Ps. 33:6), and their numbers are many; there was a multitude of them at the birth of Christ (Luke 2:13), and our Lord speaks of twelve legions of them and more, that he could have had at asking them of his Father (Matthew 26:53). According to the vision in Daniel 7:10 thousand thousands of these ministering spirits, ministered to the Ancient of days, and which number is greatly exceeded in the vision John saw (Rev. 5:11) where those in worship with the living creatures and elders are said to be ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, and may well be called an innumerable company (Heb. 12:22), and yet the passages referred to only speak of good angels; the evil angels are many also; we read of a legion of them in one man (Mark 5:9), perhaps those that fell, may be as many as those that stood; and if so, how great must be the number of them all together, at their creation? Now these are all the creatures of God; "who maketh his angels spirits" (Ps. 104:5), they are made by Jehovah the Father, who is called from hence, as well as from his making the souls of men, "the Father of spirits" (Heb. 12:9), and by Jehovah the Son, "for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible"; and among the latter, angels must be reckoned; and who are further described by "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers"; these "all were created by him and for him" (Col. 1:16). Nor is Jehovah the Spirit to be excluded from a concern in the creation of them, since, as "by the word of the Lord were the heavens made, so all the host of them", the angels, "by the breath", or Spirit, "of his mouth" (Ps 33:6). Concerning these excellent creatures of God, the following things may be observed:

First, Their names: as for proper names, though there are many of them in the Apocryphal and Jewish writings, yet in the sacred scriptures but few, perhaps no more than one, and that is Gabriel, the name of an angel sent with dispatches to Daniel, Zacharias, and to the Virgin Mary (Dan. 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19,26), for as for Michael, the Archangel, he seems to be no other than Christ, the Prince of angels, and Head of all principality and power; who is as God, like unto him, as his name signifies; yea, equal with him. The names, titles, and epithets of angels, are chiefly taken from their nature, qualities, appearances, and offices; some that are ascribed to them, do not seem to belong to them, as "cherubim" and "seraphim", which are names and characters of ministers of the word, as I have shown in a sermon of mine published; and the "Watchers", in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, thought to be angels by many, more probably are the divine Persons in the Godhead, the same with the Holy Ones, and the most High (Dan. 4:17,24). The name of Elohim is their principal one, translated "gods" (Ps. 97:7), and interpreted

of angels (Heb. 1:6), the same word is translated angels (Ps. 8:5), and which is justified by the apostle (Heb. 2:9). Now angels have this name because they have been sent with messages from God, in his name, to men; and they have spoken in his name, and been his representatives; and may be called so, as magistrates sometimes are, because God's vicegerents, and act under him, and for a like reason have the names of "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers" (Col. 1:16). Not because of any hierarchy, or order of government, established among themselves, which does not appear; but rather because of the dignity they are advanced unto, being princes in the court of heaven; and because of that power and authority which, under God, and by his direction, they exercise over kingdoms, provinces, and particular persons on earth: and if the text in Job 38:7 is to be understood of angels, it furnishes us with other names and titles of them; as "morning stars", and "sons of God"; and they may be called "morning stars", because of the brightness, splendor, and glory of their nature; and because of the clearness of their light, knowledge, and understanding; in which sense they are "angels of light"; and into one of which Satan sometimes transforms himself, who was once a bright morning star: and these may be said to be sons of God; not by grace and adoption, as saints are; much less by divine generation, as Christ is; "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee?" (Heb. 1:5), but by creation, being made in the image of God, which consists in wisdom and knowledge, in righteousness and holiness; and being his favourites, and beloved of him. They sometimes have the name of men given them; because they have appeared in an human form; such were two of those who appeared like men to Abraham, and afterwards to Lot; and two others seen by the women at Christ's sepulchre (Gen. 18:2; 19:1,5,8; Luke 24:4). The more common name given to these celestial spirits, is that of angels; the word for which in the Hebrew language, and which is used of them in the Old Testament, signifies "messengers"; and so the uncreated Angel, Christ, is called the Angel, or Messenger of the covenant (Mai 3:1), and it comes from a root, preserved in the Ethiopic dialect, which signifies to "send," because these spirits have been often sent with messages and dispatches to the children of men: the word "angels" we use, comes from a Greek word, which signifies the same; and are so called, from their being sent on, and bringing messages, which they declare, publish, and proclaim.

Secondly, The nature of angels, which is expressed by the word spirits; so good angels are called spirits, and ministering spirits (Heb. 1:7,14), and evil angels, unclean spirits, Christ gave his apostles power to cast out of the bodies of men (Mt 10:1; Luke 10:17,20), that is, spiritual subsistence, they are real personal beings, that subsist of themselves. There was a sect among

the Jews, the Sadducees, who said there was "neither angel nor spirit" (Acts 23:8), and our modern Sadducees are not less absurd, who assert that good and evil angels are no other than good and evil thoughts; but this is to be confuted, from the nature and names of angels; from the offices they bear, and are employed in; from the works and actions ascribed unto them; from the powers and faculties of will, understanding, and affections they are possessed of; and from the happiness and misery assigned to them that do well or ill. From all which it appears, that they are not imaginary, or "אתֵּנ סְנַחאר"; nor mere qualities, but personal beings; and they are of a "spiritual" nature; not compounded of parts, as bodies are; and yet they are not so simple and uncompounded as God is, who is a Spirit; in comparison to him, they approach nearer to bodies; wherefore Tertullian, and some other of the fathers, asserted them to be corporeal, though with respect to bodies they are incorporeal. It is difficult for us to form any idea of a spirit; we rather know what it is not, than what it is; "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have," says Christ (Luke 24:39), was it corporeal, a legion of spirits could never have a place in one man; nor penetrate and pass through bodies, through doors bolted and barred, as these angelic beings have: nor is it any objection to their being "incorporeal", that they have sometimes appeared as men, since they have only seemed so; or they have assumed bodies only for a time, and then laid them aside: nor that they ascend and descend, and move from place to place; for this is said of the souls of men, which are incorporeal; and being spirits, or of a spiritual nature, they are possessed of great agility, and with great swiftness and speed descend from heaven, on occasion; as Gabriel did, who flew swiftly, having his order to carry a message to Daniel, at the beginning of his prayer, and was with him before it was ended; who must move as swift as light from the sun, or lightning from the heavens: and being without bodies, they are invisible, and are among the invisible things created by the Son of God, as before observed; and though it was a notion that obtained among the Jews in Christ's time, and does among the common people with us, that a spirit may be seen; it is a vulgar error (Luke 24:37). Indeed, when angels have assumed an human form they may be seen, as they were by Abraham and Lot; and so when they appeared in the forms of chariots and horses of fire, around Elisha, they were seen by his servant, when his eyes were opened; but then these bodies seen were not their own; and these appearances were different from what they really were in themselves. Once more, being incorporeal and immaterial, they are "immortal"; they do not consist of parts of matter capable of being disunited or dissolved; and hence the saints in the resurrection will be like them in this respect, that "neither can they die any more" (Luke 20:36). God, who only

has immortality originally and of himself, has conferred immortality on the angelic spirits; and though he can annihilate them, he will not; for even the evil spirits that have rebelled against him, though they die a moral and an eternal death, yet their beings, their substances, continue and perish not; everlasting fire, eternal punishment, is prepared for the devil and his angels.

Thirdly, The qualities and excellencies of angels may be next considered; and they are more especially three, holiness, wisdom, or knowledge, and power.

1. Holiness; they are holy creatures, called "holy angels" (Mark 8:38), and so they were created, even all of them: not indeed so holy as God is; for "there is none holy as the Lord" (1 Sam. 2:2), in comparison of him all creatures are unholy; "the heavens are not clean in his sight" (Job 15:15), that is, the inhabitants of them, the angels; nor were they created immutably holy, but so as that they were capable of sinning, as some of them did; who, being left to the mutability of their own free will, departed from their "first estate", which was a state of holiness, as well as happiness; and "abode not in the truth", in the truth of holiness, in that uprightness and righteousness in which they were created; and they are called the "angels that sinned", (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 1:6; John 8:44). But others of them stood in their integrity, and are become impeccable; not owing to the power of their free will, and their better use of it than the rest; but to the electing grace of God, and the confirming grace of Christ, who is the Head of all principality and power (1 Tim. 5:21; Col. 2:10). These now, as they persist in their obedience, they are perfect in it; hence the petition Christ directed his disciples to; "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10), they are subject to the same laws and rules of morality and righteousness that men are, excepting such as are not suitable to their nature; as some duties belonging to the fourth, fifth, seventh, eighth, and tenth commands of the Decalogue; but to the rest in such manner as their nature will admit of; with all other orders, prescriptions, and directions of the divine will, they cheerfully and constantly yield an obedience to; for they "do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word" (Ps. 103:20).

2. Wisdom and knowledge; angels are very wise and knowing creatures; it is an high strain of compliment in the woman of Tekoah to David; "My Lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God; to know all things that are in the earth" (2 Sam. 14:20), yet it shows the general opinion entertained of the wisdom of angels; though in comparison of the all wise and only wise God, they are by him chargeable "with folly" (Job 4:18). Very wise and knowing creatures no doubt they are; but they are not omniscient; they know much, but not everything; they know much of themselves, through

the strength and excellency of their nature, being rational and intelligent creatures, of the highest form and class: and by observation and experience, for which they have had a long time, and great opportunity; and also by divine revelation, through which they are acquainted with many things they otherwise would not know: they know much of God, being always in his presence, and beholding his face, and whose perfections displayed in his works, they have the clearest knowledge of; and much of their fellow creatures, of the same species with them, the holy angels; who, having a language peculiar to themselves, can converse with, and communicate to each other; and much of the apostate angels, who they are set to oppose, conflict with, and counter work; and much of men, of wicked men, on whom, by divine direction, they inflict the judgments of God; and of good men, the heirs of salvation, to whom they are sent, as ministering spirits: they know much of the mysteries of providence, in the execution of which they are often employed; and of the mysteries of divine grace, not only by divine revelation, but by the church, and by the ministry of the word, they attending the congregations of the saints; though it seems that this their knowledge is imperfect, since they bow their heads, and desire to pry more into these things: and there are many things which they know not unless by marks and signs, in a conjectural way, or by a particular revelation; as the thoughts of men's hearts, which of others, men themselves know not, only the spirits of men within them; and which to know, peculiarly belongs to God, the searcher of the hearts, and trier of the reins of the children of men: nor do they know future contingencies, or what shall be hereafter, unless such as necessarily and ordinarily follow from natural causes, or may be guessed at, or are revealed unto them of God, in order to impart them to others; of the day and hour of the end of the world, and the last judgment, as no man knoweth, so neither the angels of heaven (Matthew 24:36; Rev. 1:1).

3. Power is another excellency of the angels; they are called "mighty" angels, and are said to "excel in strength"; that is, other creatures (2 Thess. 1:7; Ps. 103:20), their strength is great, and their power and authority under God very large, yet finite and limited; they are not omnipotent, nor sovereign; they do not preside over the celestial bodies, move the planets, dispose of the ordinances of heaven; bind or loose their influences, and set their dominion in the earth; they have not the power of the air, nor the command of the earth; the world is not in subjection to them: they are capable indeed, under a divine influence, and by divine direction, help, and assistance, of doing great and marvelous things; of holding the four winds of heaven; of quenching the violence of fire; and of stopping the mouths of lions; and of restraining other hurtful things: they have great power over the bodies of

men, of moving them from place to place; as an evil spirit, by permission, carried Christ, and set him upon the pinnacle of the temple; and a good spirit caught away Philip, and carried him to Azotus: they have power, when they have leave, or are ordered, to smite the bodies of men with diseases; as the men of Sodom with blindness, yea, with death itself, as seventy thousand Israelites, on account of David's numbering the people; and a hundred and forty-five thousand Assyrians in one night, as they lay encamped against Jerusalem; and Herod the king, who, being smitten by an angel, was eaten of worms, and died. But the power of angels will still more appear under the following head, concerning,

Fourthly, Their office and employment.

1. With respect to God; their work is to praise him, to celebrate the glory of his perfections; "Praise ye him, all his angels" (Ps. 148:2), and to worship him with his saints; we find them sometimes joining with men, with the living creatures and elders, in John's visions, in ascribing blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honour, power, and might unto God; and the same, in the same company, to the Lamb that was slain (Rev. 5:11,12; 7:11,12), and their work also lies in keeping the commandments of God, and doing his will in heaven and in earth; these are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth, to do his will and work in it; they wait his orders, and immediately go forth and execute them, (Zech. 6:4,5).

Secondly, With respect to Christ, on whom they are said to ascend and descend, as they did on Jacob's ladder, a type of him (Gen. 28:12; John 1:51), these attended at the incarnation of Christ; one informed the Virgin of her conception of him, removed her doubts about it, and explained to her the mystery of it; another encouraged Joseph to take her to wife, who thought to put her away, because of her pregnancy; and a third published the news of his birth to the shepherds; and who was presently joined with a multitude of them, who in chorus celebrated the glory of God, displayed therein. Yea, when God brought him, his first begotten, into the world, and manifested him to it in human nature, he gave orders to all the angelic host, to do him homage and worship, saying, "Let all the angels of God worship him" (Luke 1:30-35; Matthew 1:19, 20; Luke 2:10-14; Heb. 1:6), these had the care and charge of him in his state of humiliation; they were solicitous for the preservation of his life in his infancy; when Herod sought to take it away, an angel gave notice of it to Joseph, in a dream, and directed him to take the child and his mother, and flee into Egypt: and I see no reason why those wonderful escapes of Christ out of the hands of his enemies, in later years, when just going to destroy him, may not be ascribed to the ministration of angels; since it is

most certain, that God gave his angels charge over him, to keep him in all his ways; (see Matthew 2:13; Luke 4:29,30; John. 8:59; Ps. 91:11). When he had fasted forty days and nights in the wilderness, these same excellent creatures came and ministered food unto him (Matthew 4:11), and one of them attended him in his agony in the garden, and strengthened and comforted him (Luke 22:43), they were present at his resurrection, and rolled away the stone from the sepulchre; and declared to the women at it, that he was risen from the dead (Matthew 28:2; Luke 24:4,6,23), they accompanied him at his ascension to heaven, even thousands of them; though only in the Acts of the Apostles two are mentioned; by whom he was seen, and escorted through the region of the air, the territory of Satan, in triumph; and was received and welcomed to heaven (Ps. 68:17,18; Acts 1:10,11; 1 Tim. 3:16), and by whom he will be attended at his second coming; for they will make a part of his glorious appearing, which will be in his own glory, and in the glory of his Father, and in the glory of his holy angels (2 Thess. 1:7; Luke 9:26).

Thirdly, With respect to the saints, to whom they are sent as ministering spirits; for though in some instances they may have a concern with others, yet that is chiefly in the behalf of the church and people of God, who are more especially their charge and care, both in respect to things temporal and spiritual.

1. With respect to things temporal, instances of which are,

1. Preserving them in their infant state; there is a special providence concerned with the elect; as soon as they are born they are under the particular watch and care of it, and are distinguished by it; which is what the apostle means when he says, that "God separated him from his mother's womb" (Gal. 1:15), and which providence may be thought to be chiefly executed by the ministry of angels; for though it is not certain, which yet some scriptures countenance (Matthew 18:10; Acts 12:15), that everyone has his guardian angel, since sometimes more angels are deputed to one, and sometimes but one to many; yet doubtless saints from their birth are under the care of angels, and are preserved by them to be called; it is not known how many difficulties and dangers they are preserved from in infancy, in childhood, and in youth, as well as in later years, by means of angels.

2. Providing food for them when in want of it, or that they might not want it; as they ministered food to Christ in the wilderness; and prepared manna, called angels food, because prepared by them in the air, and let down by them from thence, for the Israelites during their forty years' travels; and as an angel dressed food for the prophet Elijah, and called upon him to arise and eat (Matthew 4:11; Ps. 78:25; 1 Kings 19:5-8).

3. Keeping off diseases from them, and healing of them according to

the promise, "He shall deliver thee from the noisome pestilence - neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling; for he shall give his angels charge over thee" &c. (Ps. 91:3,7,10,11), and if evil angels can, by divine permission, inflict diseases, as appears from the case of Job, and doubtless they would oftener do it, was it not for the interposition of good angels, why may not good angels be thought capable of healing diseases? And those many strange and wonderful cures wrought when all means have been ineffectual, may be ascribed, at least many of them, to the good offices of angels in directing to simple things, whose nature and virtue they are well acquainted with; and even they have cured diseases in a miraculous way, witness the pool of Bethesda, whose healing virtue for all diseases was owing to the agitation of its waters by an angel (John 5:4).

4. Directing and protecting in journeys, and at other times; thus Abraham, when he sent his servant to Mesopotamia to take a wife for his son Isaac, assured him that God would send an angel before him to direct and prosper him, which the servant found to be true, and blessed God for it (Gen. 24:7,27,48), so Jacob, as he was travelling, was met by the angels of God, who divided themselves into two hosts for his guard, and one went on one side of him and the other on the other; or one went before him, and the other behind him; wherefore he called the name of the place where they met him Mahanaim, which signifies two camps or armies (Gen. 32:1,2), and even all that fear the Lord have such a guard about them, for "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him" (Ps. 34:7).

5. Keeping from dangers, and helping out of them: when Lot and his family were in danger of being destroyed in Sodom, the angels laid hold on their hands and brought them forth, and set them without the city, and directed them to escape for their lives to an adjacent mountain (Gen. 19:15-17), the preservation of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, in the furnace of fire, and of Daniel in the lions' den, is ascribed to angels (Dan. 3:28 6:22), the opening of the doors of the prison where the apostles were, and setting them free; and the deliverance of Peter from prison, whose chains fell from him, and the gate opened before him, were done by angels (Acts 5:19,20 12:7,10).

2. With respect to things spiritual.

1. Angels have been employed in revealing the mind and will of God to men. They attended at mount Sinai, when the law was given; yea, it is said to be ordained by angels, and to be given by the disposition of angels, and even to be the word spoken by angels (Deut. 32:2; Acts 7:59; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2). And an angel published the gospel, and brought the good news of the incarnation of Christ, and salvation by him (Luke 2:10,11). An angel made

known to Daniel the time of the Messiah's coming; as well as many other things relating to the state of the church and people of God (Dan. 8:16-19; 9:21-27; 12:5-13). And an angel was sent to signify to the apostle John the things that should come to pass in his time, and in all ages to the end of the world (Rev. 1:1).

2. Though the work of conversion is the sole work of God, yet as he makes use of instruments in it, as ministers of the word, why may he not be thought to make use of angels? They may suggest that to the minds of men which may be awakening to them, and may improve a conviction by a providence, which may issue in conversion. However, this is certain, they are acquainted with the conversions of sinners; and there is joy in heaven, and in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance (Luke 15:7,10).

3. They are useful in comforting the saints when in distress; as they strengthened and comforted Christ in his human nature, when in an agony, so they comfort his members, as Daniel, when in great terror, and the apostle Paul, in a tempest (Dan. 9:23; 10:11,19; Acts 27:23,24), and as when in temporal, so when in spiritual distresses; for if evil angels are capable of suggesting terrible and uncomfortable things, and of filling the mind with blasphemous thoughts, and frightful apprehensions; good angels are surely capable of suggesting comfortable things, and what may relieve souls distressed with unbelief, doubts, and fears, and the temptations of Satan; for

4. They are greatly assisting in repelling the temptations of Satan; for if they oppose themselves to, and have conflicts with evil angels, with respect to things political and civil, the affairs of kingdoms and states, in which the interest and church of Christ are concerned; (see Dan. 10:13,20; Rev. 12:7), they, no doubt, bestir themselves in opposition to evil spirits, when they tempt believers to sin, or to despair; so that they are better able to wrestle against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickednesses in high places (Eph 6:12; Zech. 3:1-4).

5. They are exceeding useful to saints in their dying moments; they attend the saints on their dying beds, and whisper comfortable things to them against the fears of death; and keep off the fiends of hell from disturbing and distressing them; and they watch the moment when soul and body are parted, and carry their souls to heaven as they carried the soul of Lazarus into Abraham's bosom (Luke 16:22), and thus Elijah was carried to heaven, soul and body, in a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, which were no other than angels, which appeared in such a form, for the conveyance of him (2 Kings 2:11).

6. Angels, as they will attend Christ at his second coming, when the dead in Christ shall rise first; so they will be made use of by him, to gather the risen saints from the four quarters of the world, and bring them to him; to gather the wheat into his garner, and to take the tares, and even all things out of his kingdom that offend, and burn them (Matthew 13:40,41; 24:31). From the whole it appears, that angels are creatures, and so not to be worshipped; which kind of idolatry was introduced in the apostles' time, but condemned (Col. 2:18), the angels themselves refuse and forbid it (Rev.l9:10; 22:8,9), yet, notwithstanding, they are to be loved, valued, and esteemed by the saints, partly on account of the excellency of their nature, and partly because of their kind and friendly offices; and care should be taken to give them no offence, in public or private; (see 1 Cor. 11:10) for the saints are highly honoured, by having such excellent spirits to wait upon them, and minister unto them, and be guards about them; and it is no small part of their gospel privileges, for which they should be thankful, that they are come to an innumerable company of angels, (Heb 1:14; 12:22).

Chapter 3

OF THE CREATION OF MAN

Man was made last of all the creatures, being the chief and masterpiece of the whole creation on earth, whom God had principally and first in view in making the world, and all things in it; according to that known rule, that what is first in intention, is last in execution; God proceeding in his works as artificers in theirs, from a less perfect to a more perfect work, till they come to what they have chiefly in view, a finished piece of work, in which they employ all their skill; and which, coming after the rest, appears to greater advantage. Man is a compendium of the creation, and therefore is sometimes called a microcosm, a little world, the world in miniature; something of the vegetable, animal, and rational world meet in him; spiritual and corporal substance, or spirit and matter, are joined together in him; yea, heaven and earth center in him, he is the bond that connects them both together; all creatures were made for his sake, to possess, enjoy, and have the dominion over, and therefore he was made last of all: and herein appear the wisdom and goodness of God to him, that all accommodations were ready provided for him when made; the earth for his habitation, all creatures for his use; the fruits of the earth for his profit and pleasure; light, heat, and air for his delight, comfort, and refreshment; with everything that could be wished for and desired to make his life happy.

Man was made on the sixth and last day of the creation, and not before; nor were there any of the same species made before Adam, who is therefore

called "the first man Adam": there have been some who have gone by the name of Praeadamites, because they held there were men before Adam. So the Zabians held; and speak of one that was his master; and in the last century one Peirerius wrote a book in Latin, in favour of the same notion; which has been refuted by learned men over and over. It is certain, that sin entered into the world, and death by sin, by one man, even the first man Adam; from whom death first commenced, and from whom it has reigned ever since (Rom. 5:12,14). Now if there were men before Adam, they must have been all alive at his formation; there had been no death among them; and if they had been of any long standing before him, as the notion supposes, the world, in all probability, was as much peopled as it may be now; and if so, why should God say, "Let us make man", when there must be a great number of men in being already? And what occasion was there for such an extraordinary production of men? Why was Adam formed out of the dust of the earth? And Eve out of one of his ribs? And these two coupled together, that a race of men might spring from them, if there were men before? But it is certain that Adam was the first man, as he is called; not only with respect to Christ, the second Adam; but because he was the first of the human race, and the common parent of mankind; and Eve, the mother of all living; that is, of all men living. The apostle Paul says, that God "has made of one blood", that is, of the blood of one man, "all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26), and this he said in the presence of the wise philosophers at Athens, who, though they objected to the new and strange deities, they supposed he introduced, yet said not one word against that account he gave of the original of mankind. But what puts this out of all question, with those that believe the divine revelation, is, that it is expressly said, that before Adam was formed, "there was not a man to till the ground" (Gen. 2:5).

Man was made after, and upon a consultation held concerning his creation; "Let us make man" (Gen. 1:26), which is an address, not to second causes, not to the elements, nor to the earth; for God could, if he would, have commanded the earth to have brought man forth at once, as he commanded it to bring forth grass, herbs, trees, and living creatures of all sorts, and not have consulted with it: nor is it an address to angels, who were never of God's privy council; nor was man made after their image, he being corporeal, they incorporeal. But the address was made by Jehovah the Father to, and the consultation was held by him, with the other two divine Persons in the Deity, the Son and Spirit; (a like phrase see in Gen. 3:22; 11:7; Isa. 6:8), and such a consultation being held about the making of man, as was not at the making of any of the rest of the creatures, shows what an excellent and finished piece

of work God meant to make. Concerning the creation of man, the following things may be observed.

1. The author of his creation, God; "So God created man" (Gen. 1:27). Not man himself; a creature cannot create, and much less itself; nor angels, for then they would be entitled to worship from men, which they have refused, because their fellow servants, and it might be added, their fellow creatures. But God, who is the Creator of the ends of the earth, was the Creator of the first man, and of all since; for we are all his offspring, and therefore are exhorted to "remember our Creator" (Eccl. 12:1), or "Creators"; for so it is in the original text; for as there were more concerned in the consultation about man's creation, so in the creation of him; and the same that were in the one, were in the other, even Father, Son, and Spirit; hence we read of God our Makers in various passages of scripture (Job 35:10; Ps. 149:2; Isa. 54:5) that God the Father, who made the heavens, earth, and sea, and all that in them are, made man among the rest, and particularly made him, will not be questioned; nor need there be any doubt about the Son of God; since "without him", the eternal Word, "was not anything made that was made"; then not man; and if all things were made and created by him, whether visible and invisible, then man was made by him, who must be reckoned among these all things (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16). The character and relation of an husband to the church, more particularly belongs to Christ; and her husband is expressly said to be her maker, (Isa. 54:5 compare also Ps. 95:6-8 with Heb. 3:6,7). Nor is the Holy Spirit to be excluded from the formation of man, who had a concern in the whole creation (Gen. 1:3; Job 26:13; Ps. 33:6), and to whom Elihu particularly ascribes his formation (Job 33:4), and why not the first man made by him also? yea, the act of breathing into man the breath of life, when he became a living soul, seems most agreeable to him, the Spirit and Breath of God; and who has so great a concern in the re- creation, or renovation of man, even in his regeneration. Wherefore the three divine Persons should be remembered as Creators, and be feared, worshipped, and adored as such; and thanks be given them for creation, preservation, and for all the mercies of life, bountifully provided by them. It is pretty remarkable that the word "created" should be used three times in one verse, where the creation of man is only spoken of; as it should seem to point out the three divine Persons concerned therein, (Gen. 1:27).

II. The constituent and essential parts of man, created by God, which are two, body and soul; these appear at his first formation; the one was made out of the dust, the other was breathed into him; and so at his dissolution, the one returns to the dust from whence it was; and the other to God that gave it; and, indeed, death is no other than the dissolution, or disunion of these two

parts; "the body without the Spirit is dead"; the one dies, the other does not.

First, The body, which is a most "wonderful" structure, and must appear so when it is considered, with what precision and exactness every part is formed for its proper use, even every muscle, vein, and artery, yea, the least fiber; and that every limb is set in its proper place, to answer its designed end; and all in just symmetry and proportion, and in a subserviency to the use of each other, and for the good of the whole: to enter into a detail of particulars, more properly belongs to anatomy; and that art is now brought to such a degree of perfection, that by it most amazing discoveries are made in the structure of the human body, as the circulation of the blood, &c. So that it may well be said of our bodies, as David said of his, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Ps. 139:14). The erect posture of the body is not to be omitted, which so remarkably distinguishes man from the four footed animals, who look downward to the earth; and by which man is fitted and directed to look upward to the heavens, to contemplate them, and the glory of God displayed in them; and even to look up to God above them, to worship and adore him, to praise him for mercies received, and to pray to him for what are wanted; as well as instructs men to set their affections not on things on earth, but on things in heaven; and, indeed, it is natural for every man, whether in any great distress, or when favoured with an unexpected blessing, and when he receives tidings that surprise him, whether of good or of bad things, to turn his face upwards. In the Greek language man has his name αϖ0παμο;, from turning and looking upwards.

The body of man is very fair and beautiful; for if the children of man, or of Adam, are fair, as is suggested (Ps. 45:2), then most certainly Adam himself was created fair and beautiful; and some think he had the name of Adam given him from his beauty; the root of the word, in the Ethiopic language, signifies to be fair and beautiful; and though external beauty is a vain thing to gaze at, and for men to pride themselves with, in this their fallen state, when God can easily by a disease cause their beauty to consume away as a moth; yet it is a property and quality in the composition of man at first not to be overlooked, since it greatly exceeds what may be observed of this kind in the rest of the creatures.

The body of man was also originally made immortal; not that it was so of itself, and in its own nature, being made of the elements of the earth, and so reducible to the same again; and was supported, even in the state of innocence, with corruptible food; but God, who only has immortality, conferred it on the body of man; so that if he had never sinned, his body would not have been mortal, or have died: nor is it any objection to it, that it was supported with food; for God could have supported it with or without

food, as long as he pleased, or for ever: he could have supported it with food, not to take notice of the tree of life, which some think was designed as the means of continuing man's life perpetually, if he had not sinned; but without that, as God could and did support the body of Adam with food, even when it became mortal, through sin, for the space of nine hundred years and more; he could have supported it for the space of nine thousand, and so onward, had it been his pleasure; and therefore there can be no difficulty in conceiving that he could have supported it in an unfallen state, when it had the gift of immortality, in the same way for ever. Besides, God could, by a new act of his special grace and goodness, have translated Adam to heaven, or to an higher state of life, to greater nearness and communion with him, and supported his body without food for ever; as the bodies of Enoch and Elijah, translated, that they should not see death; and have been some thousands of years supported without food; and as the body of Christ is, and the bodies of the saints that rose at his resurrection are; and all the bodies of men, after the resurrection, will be; and it is most clear from the word of God, that death did not arise from a necessity of nature; but from sin: "Sin entered into the world, and death by sin ﷺ and, through the offence of one, many be dead ﷺ the wages of sin is death" ﷺ yea, it is expressly said, "the body is dead because of sin" (Rom. 5:12,15; 6:23 8:10), and, indeed, to what purpose was that threatening given out, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17), if man of necessity must have died, whether he had sinned or not? As say the Pelagians and Socinians; and which, if they could, they would maintain, in order to avoid the force of the argument, in favour of original sin, they deny, from death being the fruit, effect, and punishment of the sin of Adam. But now, though this body was so wonderfully and beautifully formed and gifted with immortality, yet it was made out of the dust of the earth (Gen. 2:7), that is, macerated with water, and so properly clay; hence man is said to be made out of the clay, and the bodies of men to be like bodies of clay; and to have their foundation in the dust (Job 4:18; 13:12; 33:6; Isa. 64:8). Hence some think that Adam had his name from "adamah", earth, out of which he was formed, red earth, as Josephus calls it; as in Latin he is called "homo", from "humus", the ground. And this is an humbling consideration to proud man, and especially in the sight of God, when compared with him; and still more, as this clay of his is now, through sin, become frail, brittle, and mortal; and his dust, sinful dust and ashes (Gen. 18:27), and it may serve to take down the haughtiness and pride of some men, who vaunt over their fellow creatures, and boast of their blood, and of their families, when all are made out of one mass and lump of clay, and of one blood all the nations of men are formed.

Secondly, The soul is the other part of man created by God; which is a "substance", or subsistence; it is not an accident, or quality, inherent in a subject; but is capable of subsisting of itself; it is not a good temperament of the body, as some have fancied; nor is it mere thought; it is indeed a thinking substance, in which thought is, and is exercised by it, but is distinct from it; it cannot be a mere quality, or accident, because that is not properly created, at least by itself, but is concreated, or created with the subjects in which it is; whereas the spirit of man is formed or created of God within him (Zech. 12:1), it is itself the subject of qualities, of all arts and sciences, and in its depraved state, the subject of vices, and of virtues and graces; it is an inhabitant of the body, dwells in it, as in a tabernacle, and removes from it at death, and exists in a separate state after it; all which show it is a substance, or subsistence of itself. It is not a corporal but a "spiritual" substance; not a body, as Tertullian, and others, have thought; but a spirit, as it is often called in scripture (Eccl. 12:7; Matthew 26:41; Acts 7:59). And the souls of men are called the spirits of all flesh, to distinguish them from angelic spirits, which are not surrounded with flesh, as the spirits of men are (Num. 16:22). The soul is immediately breathed from God, as Adam's soul was; and in it chiefly consists the image of God in man, and therefore trust be a spirit, as he is, though in a finite proportion, a created spirit; it is also "immaterial"; it does not consist of flesh, and blood, and bones, as the body does, and so is "immortal", and dies not when that does; when that goes to the dust, the soul returns to God: the body may be killed by men, but not the soul; when they have killed the one, they can proceed no farther; the soul survives the body, and lives for ever, it consists of various powers and faculties, the understanding, will, &c. And performs various operations of life, either immediately by itself, or mediately by the organs of the body, in the vegetable, animal, and rational way; and therefore is called the "spirit", or "breath of lives" (Gen. 2:7), and yet is but one; for though sometimes mention is made of soul and spirit, as if they were distinct (1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 4:12), yet this only respects the superior and inferior powers and faculties of one and the same soul; for otherwise the scriptures always represent man as having but one soul; and this is created by God; it is not uncreated, as he is; nor is it created by angels, as some have fancied; nor of itself; nor is it generated by and derived from immediate parents. The soul of Adam was most certainly created of God, and immediately, and breathed into him; and the same may be believed of the soul of Eve; for it cannot be thought that that was contained in, and educed out of the rib, from which her body was made; but that when that was made, God breathed into her the breath of life, as he did into Adam; and there is no reason why the souls of all men should not be made, or created,

in like manner.

Some have been, and are of opinion, that the souls of men are "ex traduce", as Tertullian; or generated by and derived from their parents, with their bodies. But against this it may be observed, that Christ was made in all things like unto us, having a true body and a reasonable soul; which soul of his could not be generated by and derived from his parents, not from a father, because he had none, as man; nor from his mother, for then she, being a sinful woman, it must have been infected and defiled with the contagion of sin, the corruption of nature; whereas he was holy and harmless, without spot and blemish. Moreover, if souls are by natural generation from their immediate parents, they must be derived either from their bodies, or from their bodies and souls, or from their souls only; not from their bodies, for then they would be corporeal, whereas they are not; not from both bodies and souls; for then they would be partly corporeal, and partly incorporeal, which, they are not; not from their souls only, for as an angel is not generated by an angel, so not a soul by a soul. Besides, if the souls of men are derived from the souls of parents, it is either from a part of them, or from the whole; not from a part, for then the soul would be partible and divisible, as matter is, and so not immaterial; and as not a part, so neither can their whole souls be thought to be communicated to them, for then they would have none, and perish; to such absurdities is this notion reducible. Besides, what is immaterial, as the soul is, can never be educed out of matter; if the soul is generated out of the matter of parents, then it is and must be material; and if material, then corruptible; and if corruptible, then mortal; and it is a maxim, that what is generated, may be corrupted; and if the soul may be corrupted, then it is not immortal; the doctrine of the soul's immortality, becomes indefensible by this notion; for if this be admitted, the other must be relinquished. But what puts this matter out of all doubt is, the distinction the apostle makes between the "fathers of our flesh", and the "Father of spirits" (Heb. 12:9). Man consists of two parts, of "flesh" and "spirit", body and soul; the former the apostle ascribes to immediate parents, as instruments thereof; and the latter to God, as the Father, Author, and Creator of it. Nor is it an objection of any moment, to the soul being of the immediate creation of God, that then a man does not generate a man: to which it may be replied, that he may be said to generate a man, though strictly speaking he only generates a part of him; as when one man kills another, he is truly said to kill a man, though he only kills his body; so a man may be said to generate a man, though he only generates the body; from whence in this case man is denominated. Moreover, as in death, the whole man may be said to die, because death is a dissolution of the whole, though

each part remains; so the whole man may be said to be generated, because in generation there is an union and conjunction of the parts of man; though one part is not generated, yet because of the union of the parts, the whole is said to be so. Nor is it an objection of greater weight, that man does not do what other creatures do, generate the whole of their species; as a horse a horse, not only the flesh, but the spirit of it; since it is not at all derogatory to man, but it is his superior excellency, that his soul is not generated as the spirit of a beast is, but comes immediately from the hand of God. Such who are otherwise right in their notion of things, give into this, in order to get clear of a difficulty attending the doctrine of original sin, and the manner of its propagation, which they think is more easily accounted for, by supposing the soul derived from parents by natural generation, and so corrupted; but though this is a difficulty not easily to be resolved, how the soul coming immediately from God, is corrupted with original sin; it is better to let this difficulty lie unresolved, than to give up so certain a truth, and of so much importance, as the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is; which, as has been seen, must be given up, if this notion is received; but there are ways and methods for the clearing of this difficulty, without being at the expense of the loss of such an important truth; as will be shown when we come to treat of the doctrine of original sin. In the meanwhile, let us take it for granted, that souls are of God's immediate creation; the making of them he claims to himself; "The souls that I have made" (Isa. 57:16; Jer 38:16).

The souls of men were not made in eternity, but in time. The pre-existence of all human souls before the world was, is a notion held by Plato among the heathens, and espoused by Origen, among Christians; but is exploded by all wise, thoughtful, and judicious men; for whatsoever was before the world was, is eternal; if souls were created before the world, then they are eternal; whereas there was nothing before the world but God, to whom eternity only belongs (Ps. 90:2), nor were souls created together, as angels were; but they are created one by one, when their bodies are prepared to receive them; they are not created without the body, and then put into it; but they are formed in it; "Who formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zech. 12:1), not brought שֹׁגֹאפֵּ, from without, as Aristotle expresses it; but when the embryo is fit to receive it, it is created by God, and united to it; but how it is united, and what is the bond of that union, we must be content to be ignorant of; as well as of the particular place of its abode, whether diffused through the whole body, as some think, or has an apartment in the brain, or has its seat in the heart, which is most likely, and most agreeable to scripture, and to that known maxim, that the heart is the first that lives, and the last that dies.

III. The difference, of sex in which man was created, is male and female

(Gen. 1:27), that is, man and woman; not that they were created together; though on the same day, and perhaps not long one after the other: the male was created first, and out of him the female, as the apostle says, "Adam was first formed, then Eve" (1 Tim. 2:13), which he observes, to show that the woman should not usurp authority, over the man, since he was before her; and by which it appears, that "the man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man", as he elsewhere asserts (1 Col. 11:9), and therefore ought to be in subjection to him: nor were they made out of the same matter, at least not as in the same form; their souls, indeed, were equally made out of nothing, out of no pre-existent matter, but their bodies differently: the body of Adam was formed out of the dust of the earth, and the body of Eve out of a rib of Adam, though both originally dust and clay, to which they both returned: the woman was very significantly made out of man's rib; not out of the upper part of man, lest she should be thought to have a superiority over him; nor out of the lower part of man, lest she should be despised and trampled upon; but from a rib of him, to signify that she should be by his side, a companion of him, and from a part near his heart, and under his arm, to show that she should be the object of his love and affection, and be always under his care and protection: and thus being "flesh of his flesh", as he himself owned, it became him to nourish and cherish her as his own flesh. Man is a social creature, and therefore God in his wisdom thought it not proper that he should be alone, but provided an help meet for him, to be a partner and companion with him, in civil and religious life; and in this difference of sex were they created for the sake of procreation of children, and of the propagation of their species, in their successive offspring, to the end of the world; and there were but one male and one female, at first created, and which were joined together in marriage by the Lord himself, to teach, that but one man and one woman only are to be joined together at one time in lawful wedlock; and these two, male and female, first created, were made after the same image; for the word man includes both man and woman; and Adam was a name common to them both in their creation, and when said to be made after the image of God (Gen. 1:26,27; 5:1,2), which image, as will hereafter be seen, lies much in righteousness and holiness. Now God made man, that is, both man and woman, upright; but they, Adam and Eve, sought out many inventions, sinful ones, and so lost their righteousness: nor is it any objection to the woman being made after the image of God, part of which lies in dominion over the creatures, as will hereafter be observed, that she is in subjection to the man; for though her husband ruled over her, yet she had equal dominion with him over the creatures. Which leads on to consider,

IV. The image of God, in which man was created; "God, said, Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness--so God created man in his own image" (Gen. 1:26,27). Whether image and likeness are to be distinguished, as by Maimonides, the one respecting the substantial form of man, his soul; the other certain accidents and qualities belonging to him; or whether they signify the same, is not very material; the latter seems probable; since in Genesis 1:27 where image is mentioned, "likeness" is omitted; and, on the contrary, in Genesis 5:1 the word "likeness" is used, and "image" omitted. Now though this is only said of man, that he is made after the image and likeness of God, yet he is not the only creature so made; angels are like to God, and bear a resemblance to him, being spirits, immaterial, immortal, and invisible, and are also righteous and holy in their nature, and are sometimes called Elohim; yet the image of God in man, differs in some things from theirs: as that part of it especially, which lies in his body, and in his connection with and dominion over the creatures; and yet he is not in such sense the image of God, as Jesus Christ the Son of God is, who is the image of the invisible God, yea, the express image of his Father's Person, having the same divine nature and perfections he has; but man, though there was in him some likeness and resemblance of some of the perfections of God; which are called his imitable ones, and by some communicable; as holiness, righteousness, wisdom, &c. yet these perfections are not really in him, only some faint shadows of them, at least not in the manner and proportion they are in God, in whom they are infinite, in man finite; and though the renewed and spiritual image of God in regenerate persons; which is of an higher and more excellent kind than the natural image of God in Adam, is called a partaking of the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4), yet not to be understood as if any partook of the nature and essence of God, and the perfections of it; only that that is wrought in them, and impressed on them, which bears some resemblance to the divine nature. The seat of the image of God in man, is the whole man, both body and soul; wherefore God is said to create man in his image; not the soul only, nor the body only; but the whole man (Gen. 1:27; 5:1). Even as the whole man, soul and body, are the seat of the new and spiritual image of God in regeneration and sanctification; The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; which the apostle immediately explains of their whole spirit, and soul and body, being preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; when and at the resurrection of the dead, the saints will most fully appear to bear the image of the heavenly One (1 Thess. 5:23; 1 Cor. 15:49).

First, The first man was made in the image of God in his "body" in some respect; hence this is given as a reason why the blood of a man's body is not to be shed, because, "In the image of God made he man" (Gen. 9:6), though

this image must not be thought to consist in the lineaments and figure of man's body; this would be to conceive of him as altogether such an one as ourselves, and as the Anthropomorphites do; who, because they find bodily members ascribed to God in scripture, as eyes, hands, &c. Fancy that he has a body like ours, and that our bodies are like his; but, as Job says, "Hast thou eyes of flesh?" (Job 10:4). No; he has not; and the same may be observed of other members ascribed unto him; for we are not to entertain such gross notions of God as if he was corporeal, or that man was like unto him in the structure of his body; not but that there, is something divine and majestic in the countenance of man, in comparison of brute creatures; and what is super excellent to them, is the erectness of his posture, as has been before observed; which fits and directs him to look up to God, whereby he has a nearness to him, and communion with him, through which he becomes more like unto him. And it may be observed, that the perfections of God, many of them, are represented by the members of the human body; as his omniscience and all-seeing providence by "eyes", which go to and fro throughout the whole earth. His omnipresence and close attention to the petitions of his people, and readiness to help and assist them, by "ears" open to their cries; and his might and power to deliver, protect, and defend them, by an arm and hand; and his pleasure and displeasure, by his face being towards good men, and against bad men; with others that might be added. Some qualities in the body of the first man, he had from God, which made him in some sense like unto him: such as "immortality"; for not only the soul of man breathed into him, was immortal, but his body also, as has been before observed; and in this there was in him some likeness to God, who only hath immortality, in the highest sense of it. Likewise "righteousness" and holiness, another branch of the divine image, as will be hereafter taken notice of; of which the body, as well as the soul, is the seat; for as that is defiled, since the fall, with the corruption of nature; so before, it was pure and holy; as when sanctified by the Spirit of God, it becomes a temple, in which he dwells; and particularly at the resurrection, when it is raised a powerful, incorruptible, spiritual, and glorious body, saints will then awake in the likeness of

God, and appear to bear the image of the heavenly One, as in soul so in body; and whereas another branch of this image lies in dominion over the creatures, that is chiefly exercised by the organs of the body. To say no more, I see no difficulty in admitting it; that whereas all the members of Christ's human body were written and delineated in the book of God's eternal purposes and decrees, before they were fashioned, or were in actual being; and God prepared a body for him in covenant, agreeable thereunto; or it was concluded in it, he should assume such a body in the fulness of time

(Ps. 139:16; Heb. 10:5). I say, I see no difficulty in admitting that the body of Adam was formed according to the idea of the body of Christ in the divine mind; and which may be the reason, at least in part, of that expression; "Behold, the man is", or rather "was, as one of us"; and so as Eve was flesh of Adam's flesh, and bone of his bone, the members of Christ are also flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone (Gen. 3:22; 2:23; Eph. 5:30). But,

Secondly, The principal seat of the image of God in man, is the soul, which was immediately breathed of God into man, and so bears the greatest resemblance of him; and thus the spiritual image of God, stamped in regeneration and renovation, is chiefly seated in the soul; "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind" (Eph. 4:23). And this appears,

1. In the nature of the soul, which is spiritual, immaterial, immortal, and invisible, as God is; God is a Spirit, most simple and uncompounded; more so than any created spirit can be supposed to be; yet the soul, which is often called a spirit, bears some likeness to him: he is expert of all matter, and only hath immortality; and so the soul is not a material being, but a spirit, it has not flesh and bones, as a body has; and is not capable of being brought to the dust of death, or to be killed: and as no man has seen God at any time, he is the King eternal, immortal, and invisible; so the soul is not to be seen; who ever saw his own soul, or the soul of another? Moreover, the soul carries some shadow of likeness to God in its powers and faculties, being endowed with understanding, will, and affections; which are, in some respects, similar to what is in God; or there is that in God which these are a faint resemblance of; and though it consists of various faculties, there is but one soul; as God, though his perfections are many, and his Persons three, yet there is but one God.

2. The image of God in the soul of man, of the first man particularly, appeared in the qualities of it; especially in its wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, and in its righteousness and holiness; for if the spiritual image in regeneration consists in these things, though in a higher and more excellent manner, and of a superior nature; it may be reasonably thought, the natural image of God in man consisted of these things in a natural way; (see Col. 3:10; Eph 4:24).

(1). It lay in knowledge and understanding. Adam, in his state of innocence, had a large share of natural knowledge; he knew much of himself, both of the, constitution of his body, and the powers of his mind; he knew much of the creatures made and given for his use, and over which he had the dominion, and to whom he gave names suitable to their nature; he had a large knowledge of God, as his Creator and Benefactor in a natural way, through the creatures; for if God, and the perfections of his nature, are

in some measure to be known from his works by the light of nature, now man is fallen, and so as to be left without excuse; a much greater degree of knowledge of him, must man unfallen be supposed to have: and who, doubtless, had knowledge of a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, since they were so manifestly concerned in the creation of all things, and particularly in his own; and this seems necessary, that he might yield that worship and adoration which was due from him to each of them; but then he knew nothing of Christ, as Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour; this was not revealed to him until after his fall, nor did he need it before; on which it was made known to him, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and be the Saviour of him and his posterity: nor did he know anything of pure, spiritual, and evangelic truths, and which were not suitable to the state in which he was; such as justification by the righteousness of Christ; pardon of sin through his blood; atonement by his sacrifice; and eternal life, as the free gift of God through him: these were things his eye had not seen, nor his ear heard of, nor did it enter into his heart to conceive of before his fall, and the revelation of them to him, which was made upon that; but then he knew all things necessary to be known by him; all things natural, moral, and civil; yea, he had some things revealed to him, and which he knew under a prophetic spirit; some things past, as the formation of Eve out of his rib; and, no doubt, his own formation, and the manner of it; and the whole creation, and the order of it, in six days; and other things to come, as that Eve should be the mother of all living; and that marriage, as it was appointed, would be continued in the world for the propagation of his species.

(2). The image of God in Adam, further appeared in that rectitude, righteousness, and holiness, in which he was made; for "God made man upright"; a holy and righteous creature (Eccl. 7:29), which holiness and righteousness were, in their kind, perfect; his understanding was free from all error and mistakes; his will biased to that which is good; his affections flowed in a right channel, towards their proper objects; and there were no sinful motions and evil thoughts in his heart; nor any propensity and inclination to that which is evil; and the whole of his conduct and behaviour was according to the will of God. And this righteousness of his was natural, and not personal and acquired; it was not obtained by the exercise of his free will; it was lost, but not got that way; had it been personal, and acquired his own power, and made up of acts of his own, when lost, it would only have been lost for himself; and his posterity would have had no concern in it; but it was the righteousness of his nature, it was co-created, or created with it, and so common to it; and had he stood in it, would have been propagated to his posterity; but, on the contrary, he sinning, whereby his nature was defiled, a

corrupt nature is propagated instead of it. The papists, and those of the same complexion with them, say that Adam was created in his pure naturals; their meaning is, that he was created neither holy nor unholy; neither righteous nor unrighteous; but capable of being either the one or the other, as he made use of the power of his free will. This notion is advanced in favour of man's free will, and to weaken the doctrine of original sin.

(3). This image also lies in the freedom of the will, and the power of it. As God is a free agent, so is man; and as the freedom of the divine will does not lie in an indifference and indetermination to good and evil, but is only to that which is good; so was the will of man in his state of integrity: as likewise the will of the good angels and glorified saints. And man had a power to obey the will of God, and do his commands; and as he had not only a positive law given him to abstain from the forbidden fruit, as a trial of his obedience; so he had the moral law written on his heart, as the rule of his obedience, and had power and ability to keep it; for as it was required of him to love the Lord his God with all his heart, and soul, and strength; so he could, if he would, have performed the same; and such strength and ability were due unto him, from the laws of creation; for if God required of him obedience to his holy law, it was but fit and right that he should give him a conformity of nature and will to it, and power to obey it; though, he was not obliged to give him grace and strength to persevere, nor to render him impeccable and immutable; wherefore, leaving him to the mutability of his will, he sinned, and fell from his former estate, which on that account is called "vanity" (Ps. 39:5).

3. The image of God in the whole man, soul and body, or in his person, lay in his immortality, natural to his soul, and conferred on his body; and also in his dominion over the creatures; for this was the end God proposed in the creation of him, that he might have dominion over the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea; and accordingly all were put in subjection to him (see Gen. 1:26,28; Ps. 8:6-8); in which he resembled God, the Governor of the universe; and hence kings, governors, and civil magistrates are called gods, because they bear such a likeness to him (Ps. 82:6).

4. And lastly: this image lay in the blessedness of man, in his original state; for as God is God over all and blessed, and is the blessed and only Potentate; so man, in a lower sense, was blessed above all the creatures; having an healthful constitution, an immortal body, and everything grateful and suitable to it; and a soul knowing, wise, holy, just, and good; and he placed in the most delightful spot in the whole globe, with all the profusion of nature about him, and all creatures subject to him, enjoying communion

with God, through the creatures, though but in a natural way; and God was pleased sometimes to appear to him, and talk with him; and yet man, being thus in honour, abode not long, but became like the beasts that perish; so that we may look back and see from what an high estate man is fallen, and to what a low estate sin has brought him, by means of which he is come short of the image and glory of God, in which he was created; and yet may adore the grace and wisdom of God, which has brought us into a more excellent state by Christ; a state more spiritual, firm, and secure. Adam's knowledge was natural knowledge; his holiness and righteousness natural holiness and righteousness; the covenant made with him a natural covenant; the communion he had with God was in a natural way; and all his benefits and blessings natural ones: but believers in Christ are blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, and have a spiritual image stamped upon them, which can never be lost; and into which they are changed from glory to glory, till it becomes perfect.

Chapter 4

OF THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

The next external work of God is "Providence"; by which all the creatures God has made are preserved, governed, guided, and directed. The word itself is never used of the divine Being syllabically, or in so many syllables in scripture; yet the thing itself, or what is meant by it, is fully declared and clearly expressed; as, that God upholds all things by his power; governs the world by his wisdom; looks down upon the earth, takes notice and care of all his creatures in it, and makes provision for them, and guides and directs them to answer the ends for which they were made; which is the sum and substance of Providence: nor need we abstain from the use of the word on that account, since there are many other words used to express Christian doctrines, not to be found in the Bible, though the things expressed by them are, as trinity, satisfaction, &c. Nor because it is taken from the school of Plato, who is said to be the first that made mention of the providence of God in so many words, as he often does: nor because used by the Stoic philosophers, and other heathens, who have wrote and spoken well of divine providence. It is once used in scripture, of the civil administration of a Roman governor, Felix, by Tertullus the orator, when he pleaded before him against the apostle Paul, whom he compliments on the "great quietness" the Jews enjoyed under his government, and "the very worthy deeds done unto their nation by his providence" (Acts 24:3), that is, by his wise and prudent administration of government, and the provident care he took of the peace and welfare of the Jewish nation; as he would be understood. And if the word may be used of

such an administration of government; or of that of a civil magistrate; then much more of the great Governor of the world, whose is the kingdom of the whole world, and he is the Governor among the nations; whose kingdom rules over all, and who does according to his will and pleasure in heaven and in earth; and does all things, well and wisely.

Providence, of which we are now about to treat, must be considered as distinct from praevidence, praevision, prescience, foresight, foreknowledge, and predestination; which all respect some act in the divine mind in eternity; and are no other than the eternal purposes and decrees of God, who foresaw and foreknew all persons and things that would be; he determining within himself that they should be; for "known unto him were all his works from the beginning", or from eternity; even all that would be done in time, from the beginning to the end of the world; he knew they would be, because he decreed they should be; this may be called eternal providence, virtual providence, providence in purpose; but providence in time, which is what is now under consideration and may be called actual providence, is the execution of whatsoever God has foreknown and determined; "Who worketh all things after the counsel of his will" (Eph. 1:11), the eternal will of God is the rule of his conduct in providence, according to which he proceeds in it; and his wisdom, which fixed his will, and therefore said to be the counsel of his will, presides, guides, and directs in the execution of it; which execution of it is called his working; wherefore providence is to be reckoned as his work. The wise man says, "There is a time to every purpose under the heaven"; whatever is done under the heavens in time, there was a purpose for it in eternity; and for the execution of that purpose a time was fixed; and at that time it is brought about by the providence of God; who "makes everything beautiful in his time"; in the time and season in which he appointed it to be done (Eccl. 3:1,11). Purpose and providence exactly tally and answer to each other; the one is the fulfillment of the other; "Surely, as I have thought", saith the Lord, "so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand" (Isa. 14:24).

The providence of God is not only expressed in scripture, by his sustaining, upholding, and preserving all things; and by his government of the world, and the execution of his purposes; but by his looking down upon the earth, and the inhabitants of it; taking a prospect of them, and notice of their ways, and works, and actions, and dealing with them according to them; "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men", &c. (Ps. 14:2; 33:13,14). The providence of God may be argued from, and illustrated by the senses which he imparts to men, for their good, preservation, and safety; particularly those of hearing and seeing. He has placed the eyes and the ears

in the head of the human body, to look out after and listen to what may turn to the advantage or disadvantage of the members of the body; hence the Psalmist reasons, "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see?" He must needs hear all that is said, and see all that is done in the world, and must know and take notice of all persons in it, their works, their words, and even their very thoughts; as it follows; "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of men, that they are vanity" (Ps. 94:9-11). All which is observed, to convince such brutish and ignorant people, who act as if they disbelieved the providence of God (Ps. 94:3-8).

The words "provide" and "providing", are sometimes used of men in general, and of masters of families in particular, who are to "provide things honest in the sight of all men", both for themselves and for all under their care; and, "If any provide not for his own, he is worse than an infidel" (Rom. 12:17; 1 Tim. 5:8), and which provision, incumbent on such persons, may give us an idea of the providence of God; in that branch of it particularly, which concerns the provision which he, as the great Master of his family, throughout the whole universe, makes for it, even from the greatest to the least; "The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season; thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing" (Ps. 145:15,16; 104:27,28), even the very ravens and their young, such mean and worthless creatures, are provided for by him; "Who provideth for the raven his food, when his young ones cry unto God?" (Job 38:41; Luke 12:24), and how much more does he not, and will he not provide for rational creatures? It was an instance of great ingratitude and unbelief in the Israelites, that after many tokens of divine goodness to them, they questioned the power of God to take care of them; saying, "Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? ❧ Can he give bread also? ❧ Can he provide flesh for his people?" Yes, he could and did for six hundred thousand besides women and children; and he can and does provide food for all creatures, rational and irrational; and he can and does provide for men, what is necessary for them, when in the greatest extremity. From God's providing a sacrifice in the room of Isaac, when just going to be slain on mount Moriah, it became a proverbial expression in after times, "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen"; or, "the Lord will appear"; or, "will provide", and grant supplies, and deliver out of difficulties (Gen. 22:8,14), and from the provision which God makes for all his creatures, as the great Master of the family, Providence, which with the heathens was reckoned as a deity, is represented like a good housewife, or mistress of a family, administering to the whole universe, and was pictured like a grave elderly matron, and this is one of the titles of the goddess Minerva.

Once more: the providence of God is expressed by his "care" of his creatures; "Doth God take care of oxen?" (1 Cor. 9:9). He does, and even of creatures inferior to them; and much more then of those who are superior to them; even of all rational creatures; and especially of them that believe; who therefore are encouraged to be "casting all their care upon him, for he careth for them" (1 Pet. 5:7). It is particularly said of the land of Canaan, that it was "a land which the Lord careth for"; from one end of the year to the other (Deut. 11:12), and it is true of the whole world in general, that God cares for it, and all creatures in it; not only from year to year, and from age to age, but from the beginning of the world to the end of it. Now God's sustentation of the world, his government of it, the view and notice he takes of it, the provision he makes for all creatures in it, and his care of and concern for them; this is providence. And having considered the name and thing, and what is meant by it, I shall proceed,

1. To prove a divine providence, by which all things are upheld, governed, guided, and directed. And,

1a. This appears from the light of nature; for as by that it may be known that there is a God who has created all things; so by the same that there is a providence that superintends, orders, and disposes all things. Hence the heathens held a providence; all nations, even the most barbarous; all the sects of the philosophers owned it, but one, the Epicureans, and that from a foolish notion that it was unworthy of God, affected his happiness, and interrupted his peace and quiet. Pythagoras asserted, there is a kindred between God and men; and that God exercises a providence over us. Plato gives this reason for his being the soul of the universe, or why he thought that was a living creature, because it was under the providence of God; and it is affirmed by the Stoics, that the world is inhabited by the mind and providence of God; the mind dispensing and administering through every part of it, as the soul in us; and that God governs the world by his providence, and all things in it. Seneca wrote a book on providence, in which he says, providence presides over all, and God is in the midst of us. Menedemus, the philosopher, was an advocate for the doctrine of providence. Chrysippus wrote on the same subject also. They are the words of Cicero, that by the providence of God, the world, and all the parts of it, were both constituted at the beginning, and administered by it at all times: and the apostle Paul, in a discourse of his before the philosophers at Athens, concerning God and his providence, produces a passage from Aratus, one of their own poets, in proof of the same; "We are also his offspring" (Acts 17:28), his creatures, his children, and his care; in whom we live, move, and have our being. Even God's sustentation of irrational creatures, his preservation of them, and the

provision he makes for them, prove a providence; wherefore Job (Job 12:7-10), sends his friends to them to learn this; "Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee", &c.

2. Divine providence may be concluded from the Being of God; the same arguments that prove the one prove the other; if there is a God, there is a providence; and if there is a providence, there is a God; these mutually prove each other; as he is a fool that says there is no God, he is equally a fool that says there is no providence: these are closely connected together, and cannot be the one without the other; wherefore, when the Psalmist had observed, that "the fool said in his heart, there is no God", he immediately observes the providence of God; "The Lord looked down from the heaven upon the children of men" (Ps. 14:1,2). And such in all ages who have denied a providence, have been looked upon as atheists. Hence Cicero observes of Epicurus, that though he made use of the word God in his philosophy, that he might not offend the Athenians; yet in reality removed him from it. And the same writer thus reasons, If it is granted there is a God, it must be owned, that the administration of the world is by his counsel; and again, those who allow there is a God, must confess that he does something, and something famous and excellent; and nothing is more excellent than the administration of the world; and therefore it must be by his counsel. And to me, says Lucilius, he that does nothing (as such Epicurus makes God to do) seems entirely not to be, to have no being; so closely connected are God and his providence, according to the reasoning of this wise heathen: the oracle of Apollo, at Miletus, calls providence the firstborn of God: and it is easy to observe, that the Lord puts the idolatrous heathens upon proving the truth of the deities they worshipped, by acts of providence; by declaring things past; foretelling things to come; and by doing good or evil; bestowing good things on their votaries, and avenging their enemies; all which he claims to himself and which could not be proved to belong to them; and therefore no deities; for a deity without foresight, and without forecast, inactive and impotent to do good or evil, to reward or chastise men, could be no deity; see (Isa. 41:22,23; 42:8,9; 43:9; 46:9,10).

3. The providence of God may be argued from the creation of the world; as the Being of God may be proved from thence, so the providence of God; for if the world was created by him, it must be upheld by him; for as it could not make itself, so neither could it sustain itself; the same power that was requisite to create it, is necessary to uphold it; and therefore it may be observed, that creation and conservation, which is one branch of providence, are closely joined together (Col. 1:16,17; Neh. 9:6; Heb.. 1:2,3). God, the great builder of all things, does not act by them as an architect, that builds an house and has

no further concern with it, but leaves it to stand or fall of itself; or that builds a ship, and has nothing more to do with it; he takes the government of it, and steers and directs it; he that is the Creator of the world, is the Governor of it; the Creator is not one, and the governor another, but the same; and is as equal to the government of it, as to the creation of it; and creation gives him a right to govern; and without his support and government of it, it could not long subsist: besides, there must be some ends for which it is Created; which ends it cannot attain and answer of itself; but must be directed and influenced by the Creator of it. Wherefore,

4. The perfections of God, and the display of them, make a providence necessary, particularly his power, wisdom, and goodness: since God has created the world, had he not supported it, but left it to chance and fortune, it would have seemed as if he could not have supported it; then where had been the greatness of his power, and the glory of it, who is said to be the Almighty? And since he made it with some views, and to answer some ends, had it not been influenced, guided, and directed by him, to answer these ends; where had been the wisdom of him, who is called the all wise and the only wise God? To make a world of creatures, and then neglect them, and take no care of them, where would have been his goodness? Whereas, the whole earth is full of it; and he is good to all his creatures; and his tender mercies are over all his works; so that from these perfections of God, we may be assured of his providence.

5. It may be concluded from the worship of God; which this is a powerful inducement to, and the ground of. The Being of God is the object of worship; and his providence is the basis of it; without this there would be no fear of God, no reverence for him, no adoration of him: the two main branches of worship are prayer and praise; but if God has no regard to his creatures, and they receive nothing from him, nor have an expectation of any from him, what have they to pray to him for? Or what to praise him for? Nor what have they to fear from him, if they have no connection with him, and are not accountable to him? Hence Cicero, an heathen, could say, "There are some philosophers (meaning the Epicureans) who suppose that God takes no care at all of human affairs; but, says he, if this is true, what piety can there be? What sanctity? What religion?" Therefore they are the libertines of the age, who in any period, as the followers of Epicurus, deny the providence of God; and this they do, that they may have the reins loose on their own necks, and be under no restraint, but at liberty to indulge to the gratification of every sensual lust; such were those of that cast among the Jews, who said, "The Lord hath forsaken the earth; and the Lord seeth not"; and therefore we may do as we please; there is none to observe what we do,

nor to call us to an account for it; "The Lord will not do good, nor will he do evil"; neither bestow favours on good men, nor correct and punish evil men (Ezek. 9:9; Zeph. 1:12). And hence, because it has been observed, that good men are afflicted, and wicked men prosper, which some have improved into an argument against divine providence, which will be considered hereafter; this has been inferred from it, that it is in vain to serve God, and no profit to keep his ordinances (Mai. 3:14,15).

6. The settled and constant order of things, from the beginning of the world to this time, clearly evince a divine Providence; the ordinances of the heavens, of the sun, moon, and stars, have never departed from their stated and fixed order and appointment; nor the covenant of the day and of the night ever been broken (Jer. 31:35; 33:20), the sun goes forth every morning, like a giant to run his race; takes his circuit from one end of the heavens to the other, and with great exactness observes his rising and setting, and makes every day in the year; and who also performs his annual course with great precision, and who also finishes every returning year; and this course he has constantly ran almost six thousand years: can this be thought to be the effect of chance, and not of an all wise, all powerful, and all disposing Providence, which has so long supported it in its being, supplied it with light and heat, given and continued its motion unto this day? The constant revolution of night and day; and of the seasons of the year; of seedtime and harvest; of cold and heat; and of summer and winter, are standing and perpetual proofs of a divine providence; since these take place every year in their order, throughout the whole world, according to the different climates of it. Were there only now and then an instance of such an order of things, it might not deserve so much notice; but that it should be constant and continued, can never surely be thought to be the sports of chance and fortune; and especially when it is observed, that so much, and things of the greatest importance, depend upon such a constant revolution of them, with respect to the welfare of mankind. Every year, in the winter season, grass, herbs, and plants, wither and seem to die; trees are stripped of all their fruit and verdure, and look as if they were dead; when, in the returning spring, which never fails to come, there is a reproduction of all these, a sort of a new creation of them; "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit; they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth" (Ps. 104:30). Can this be observed, as it may with amazement, and a Providence denied! To all which may be added, the constant succession of men in all ages; "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh" (Eccl. 1:4), so that the earth is continually replenished with inhabitants, notwithstanding so many are daily taken off by death, in various shapes. All which can never be without an all wise

disposing Providence.

7. Were there not a supporting and superintending providence concerned in the world, and the things of it, all would soon fall into confusion and destruction. If God, that has hung the earth upon nothing, without any support than his own power, was to withdraw his hand and let go his hold, it would drop into its original chaos, into Tohu and Bohu; the earth, and the inhabitants of it, would soon and easily be dissolved, did not the Lord bear up the pillars of it (Ps. 75:3), and where anarchy takes place, and no government is, there is confusion and every evil work. In families, in bodies of men gathered tumultuously together, and in towns, cities, kingdoms, and states, where is no head, no governor, none to preside, guide, and direct, dissipation and ruin quickly ensue; and so it would be with the world in general, if not governed and superintended by a divine providence. The founding of kingdoms and states, and the setting up of political government in the world, are a proof of divine providence; and one way and means by which it is exercised, as will be seen hereafter; and even the erection of the great monarchies of the earth, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman, and the dissolution of them, show a divine providence: those monarchies could never have risen to the height they did, nor come to the destruction they have, but by that providence "that removeth kings and setteth up kings" at pleasure (Dan. 2:21).

8. The many blessings of goodness, the daily benefits and favours, which are continually bestowed by God on his creatures, manifestly declare his providence; all creatures partake of his goodness, he is kind to the unthankful and to the evil he makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust; he has not left himself without a witness of his providential goodness in any age to any people, Jews or Gentiles, in that he has done good unto them, given them rain and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness (Luke 6:35 Matthew 5:45; Acts 14:17).

9. The judgments of God in the earth, at different periods of time, are a demonstration of the providence of God. Who can believe that the universal deluge, the sweeping away of a world of ungodly men by a flood, and saving eight persons only in an ark, were the effects of chance, and not of providence? And that the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, with the cities of the plain, by fire and brimstone from heaven, was by accident, as a common fire is sometimes said to be? The same may be observed of the plagues of Egypt, the drowning of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, the captivities of the Israelites, the destruction of their neighbours, the Moabites, Edomites, &c. So that the name of one of them is not to be found in the world, as was foretold; when they, though scattered up and down in it, are yet preserved.

The earthquakes, famine, pestilence, fire and sword, which are frequently in the world, show a divine providence; for God is "known by the judgments which he executeth" (Ps. 9:16).

10. The fears of punishment and hopes of reward in men, show the consciousness they have of the notice God takes of them and their actions, which is one branch of providence. Their fears, either of judgments coming upon them now, or of a future judgment, at which Felix trembled when he heard of it, plainly declare their sense of a divine Being, and of his knowledge of their conduct and behaviour, and resentment of it; who they justly fear will punish them for it, here or hereafter; why else were some of the Roman Caesars, as Augustus, Tiberius, and Caligula, so terribly frightened at thunder and lightning; but because they were convinced there was a God in the heavens, from whence they came, who saw and knew all their wicked actions, and to whom they were accountable? And this is to be observed, more or less, in all mankind; whose consciences accuse or excuse, according to their actions; if evil, their minds are filled with dread, and a fearful expectation of wrath and vengeance: if good, they entertain hopes of receiving good things here, and better hereafter; which is a clear proof from men themselves, and they are obliged to own it, and say, "Verily, there is a reward for the righteous; verily, he is a God that judgeth in the earth" (Ps. 58:11). I proceed,

II. To observe some distinctions which have been used by some, and may be useful to explain and confirm the doctrine of providence.

First, Providence may be considered as "immediate" and "mediate".

I. Immediate providence, is what is exercised by God of himself, without the use of any mean, instrument, or second cause: thus the world is upheld by himself, by his own power, without the intervention of any other; and every creature, as to its being and subsistence, is immediately dependent upon him; in whom all live, move, and have their being (Heb. 1:3; Acts 17:24). God sometimes works without means, as when he made the earth fruitful before any rain, or dew, or mist, fell upon it, or before there was any man to till it (Gen. 2:5,6), and as he supported the body of Moses in the mount, and of Christ in the wilderness, without food, for the space of forty days and forty nights; and as he sometimes has wrought salvation in the midst of the earth; which is one branch of providence; and has given victory over enemies without fighting, as to the Israelites at the Red Sea; to the same, in the times of Joshua, before the walls of Jericho; and in the times of Gideon over the Midianites; and in the days of Jehosaphat over the Ammonites, and others. Sometimes he works over and above means, and what means cannot reach unto, which exceeds the power of nature; of this kind are all

miraculous operations; such as those wrought in Egypt; and by Christ and his apostles; as turning water into wine; and multiplying a little food for the supply of multitudes. Yea, God works sometimes contrary to the nature of things, of means, and second causes; as when he caused waters, which naturally flow or stand, to rise up and become heaps, and divide, and be as a wall, to the right and left, as the waters of the Red Sea and Jordan were to the Israelites, and through which they passed as on dry land; and as when he caused the sun, which naturally goes forth and forward as a giant to run his race, to stand still, as in the days of Joshua; and to go back ten degrees on the dial of Ahaz, in the times of Hezekiah; and he suffered not fire to burn, which it naturally does, combustible things; even not so much as to singe the garments of Daniel's three companions, when cast into a furnace of fire; and to cause lions, naturally voracious, to shut their mouths and not touch Daniel, when cast into their den. All which God sometimes does; that is, acts immediately, and without the use of means, and even above them, and contrary to them; to show that he is not tied to means and second causes; and that his people, those that trust in him, may not despair when things are at the worst, and there appears no way of deliverance; but to exercise faith in the God of providence, who is all wise and all powerful, and can and will appear for them, and be seen in the mount of difficulties; (see Dan. 3:16,17).

2. Mediate providence is what is exercised in the use of means, or by them; and which God does, not from any defect of power in him; but, as Dr. Ames observes, because of the abundance of his goodness, that he might communicate, as it were, some dignity of efficiency to the creatures; and in them make his own efficiency the more discernible: hence it may be observed, that he sometimes makes use of means to produce great and noble effects, which are unlikely, and for which they do not seem to have any aptitude; as when with a small army, an handful of men, comparatively speaking, he gives victory over a large one; for there is no restraint or hindrance to him; and it is nothing with him to save by many or by few; and whether with many, or with them that have no power (1 Sam. 14:6; 2 Chron. 14:11; 24:24; 1 Cor. 1:27,28). And sometimes he makes proper means ineffectual to answer the end of them, and for which they seem to be well adapted; for what seems more for the safety of a king and his country then a well mounted cavalry, and a well disciplined and numerous army? And yet these are sometimes of no service, and are vain things for safety (Ps. 33:16,17). And what more fit to support the lives of men, and to refresh and nourish when hungry, than wholesome food? Yet men may eat, and not have enough, or be nourished by it (Hosea 4:10). Indeed, ordinarily God does work by means; he makes the earth fruitful by snow and rain descending upon it; whereby it gives

seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; produces grass for cattle, and herb for the service of men; with other necessaries of life. There is a chain of second causes that depend upon the first, and are influenced by it, and act in subordination to one another; the Lord hears the heavens, and the heavens hear the earth, and the earth hears the corn, and the wine, and the oil, and they hear Jezreel (Hosea 2:21,22). And usually God supplies and supports the bodies of men by means of food, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water, by giving a blessing thereunto. And he exercises his providence, commonly by the use of means, to show men that they are to make use of means, and not slight them; no, not even when events are certain to them; as the cases of Hezekiah and Paul's mariners show (Isa. 38:21; Acts 27:31). Yet means, or second causes, are never to be depended on; but the first Cause is to be looked unto for success, and to him the glory is to be given (Ps. 115:1-3; 127:1,2).

Secondly, Providence may be considered both as ordinary and extraordinary.

I. Ordinary providence is what is exercised in the common course of means, and by the chain of second causes; and according to the original law of nature impressed on beings from the beginning. From this law, the ordinances of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, have not departed, except in extraordinary cases; and the revolutions of day and night, and of the seasons of the year, are constantly and regularly observed; and all things act and move by an inclination of nature settled in them; fire burns, and sparks fly upwards; heavy bodies descend, and light ones ascend; in animate and irrational creatures there is an instinct of nature suitable to their natures, by which they are guided and directed, and do not ordinarily swerve from it; and even in inanimate creatures, as the meteors of the air, snow, rain, hail, &c. There is an obediential power and influence, by which they perform the will of their Creator, and answer the ends for which they were made (Ps. 148:8).

2. Extraordinary providence is that in which God goes out of his common way; and which consists of miraculous operations, as before observed, such as exceed the power of nature; as when he ordered rocks to be smitten, and waters gushed, out to supply the Israelites, their flocks and their herds; and rained manna about their tents every morning in the week, excepting one, by which he supported them near forty years in a wilderness; and so the prophet Elijah, though the food he was fed with was ordinary and common, yet it was in an extraordinary manner that he was furnished with it; ravens brought him bread and flesh morning and evening, while he was by the brook Cherith; and he was supplied with food at Zarephath, in a widow's

house, through the very extraordinary multiplication of an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse; and when in a wilderness, had a cake baked for him by an angel, and a cruse of water set at his head, of which he eat and drank; and in the strength of which he travelled forty days and forty nights (1 Kings 17:6,12-16; 19:5-8).

Thirdly, Providence may be considered as universal and singular; or, as general and particular.

I. Universal or general providence, is what is concerned with the whole world, and all things in it; and is expressed by upholding and preserving all things that are created; it is God's sustentation, preservation, and continuance of creatures in their being; this is acknowledged by some, who yet do not agree to -

2. A singular or particular providence, as concerned with every individual, and especially with rational creatures and their actions. But most certain it is, that God not only in his providence is concerned for the world in general, but for all individuals in it; every star in the heavens is known by him, taken notice of, and preserved; "He bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by names - for that he is strong in power; not one faileth" (Isa. 40:26), the cattle on a thousand hills, and the thousands of cattle on those hills, are known and provided for by him; and so are all the fowls of the air, and of the mountains; and even a sparrow does not fall to the ground without his notice and will (Ps. 50:10,11; Matthew 10:29). And he looks down upon all the inhabitants of the earth, and considers their ways, and works, and actions (Ps. 33:13-15). The sentiments of the Stoic philosophers come the nearest to those of divine revelation, concerning this matter; which, according to Cicero, are, that not only mankind in general, but that singulars, or individuals, are cared and provided for by the immortal gods: and yet Seneca, one of that sect, says, that the gods take a greater care of universals than of singulars; and elsewhere, that they take care of mankind in general, and sometimes are careful of singulars, as if they were not always careful of them; and Cicero, though he represents Balbus the Stoic, as saying that the gods take care of singulars; yet with this exception, that with respect to some externals, they take care of great things, but neglect small ones. Sallustius, the Cynic philosopher, is very expressive; he says, Providence and fate, as they are concerned about nations and cities, so about every man; and so Plato strongly argues, that the providence of God is concerned about less as well as greater matters; and according to the Christian doctrine, as will be seen hereafter; not only men, but the most minute things, are under the notice of providence.

Fourthly, Providence may be considered as both common and special.

Common providence is that which belongs to the whole world, and all the creatures in it, and to all mankind, and is exercised in the common and ordinary way; for God is "good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works" (Ps. 145:9). Special providence is what concerns the church of God in all ages. The Jewish church, under the former dispensation, was distinguished from all the people of the earth, and chosen to be a special and peculiar people, and had special favours bestowed upon them; and the Christian church, under the gospel dispensation, was particularly cared for at the beginning of it, and remarkably increased and preserved under the persecution of the heathen emperors; and which has been, and will be, nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, in the wilderness, during the reign of antichrist, and then will become great and glorious. Moreover God, as the God of providence, is the Saviour and Preserver of all men; but especially of "them that believe" (1 Tim. 4:10). And the providence respecting God's elect will be particularly considered hereafter.

Fifthly, Providence may be considered as real and moral: real, is what concerns things, and the essence of them, by which they are sustained and preserved. Moral providence, or what is commonly called God's moral government of the world, respects rational creatures, angels, and men, to whom God has given a law, as the rule of their actions, which consists of precepts and prohibitions, the sanctions of which are promises and threatenings; and it is explained and enforced by instructions, persuasions, admonitions, &c. And according to which reasonable law, a reasonable service is required of reasonable creatures. God deals with them as their works and actions appear to be. Of this providence of God, respecting angels and men, especially in their first estates, and change of them, a particular notice will be taken of in some following chapters. I shall next observe,

III. The Author of providence, the efficient Cause of it, and the instruments made use of by him in the administration of it. God, that is in the heavens, and looks down upon the earth, does in it whatever he pleases; he sitteth King for ever, and his kingdom rules over all. Elihu puts such a question as this, "Who hath disposed the whole world?" (Job 34:13), the answer to it must be, He that made it has a right to dispose it, and of all things in it; and he does dispose thereof according, to his pleasure; "All things are of him", in creation; and all things are "through him", in providence; and all things are to him, directed and ordered to his glory (Rom. 11:36), God, Father, Son, and Spirit, are the one efficient Cause and Author of providence. God, the Father of Christ; "My Father worketh hitherto", not in creation; for the works of creation were finished in six days; and then God ceased from his work; but in providence, in which he worked from the beginning of the world to the

time of Christ on earth; and continued to work; for he says not, my Father hath worked, but worketh, continues to work in a providential way; for the work of providence is his work; "Who worketh all things after the counsel of his will" (Eph. 1:11), which is said of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus; who has blessed his people in Christ, chosen them in him, and predestinated them by him to the adoption of children; and who is spoken of all along in the context to the passage cited. Our Lord addresses his Father as "the Lord of heaven and earth", the Maker and Possessor of both and Governor of them, when he is speaking of a sovereign act of his in providence; hiding some things from the wise and prudent, and revealing them to babes; and adds, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father", to subserve the ends of his mediatorial kingdom in a providential way (Matthew 11:25- 27).

Christ, the Son of God, is equally concerned with his divine Father in the work of providence; "My Father worketh hitherto", as before observed; "and I work", the same work jointly along with him; for "whatsoever things he" (the Father) "doth, those also doth the Son likewise" (John 5:17,19). "By him all things consist"; are sustained, upheld, preserved, and supplied, and guided, to answer the ends for which they are created by him (Col. 1:16,17; Heb. 1:2,3). Nor is the Holy Spirit to be excluded from the work of providence, who had so great a concern in that of creation; the heavens were garnished by him; yea, the host of them were made by him; he moved upon the waters that covered the chaos, and brought it into a beautiful form and order; and several of the works of providence are particularly ascribed to him; the renovation and reproduction of things every returning spring are ascribed to him; "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, and they are created; thou renewest the face of the earth" (Ps. 104:30). The government of the world, and the ordering and disposing of all things in it, are attributed to him, without the counsel and direction of others; "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, &c. Or, being his counsellor, hath taught him?" &c. (Isa. 40:13,14). And he that is so much concerned in the regeneration, conversion, and sanctification of men, and has been in all ages of the world, with which the affairs of providence are so closely connected in numberless instances, can never be shut out of the administration of them. Father, Son, and Spirit, are the efficient cause of providence; and to whom, and not to fate, fortune, and chance, are all things in it to be ascribed. The instruments God makes use of in the administration of providence are many; some of the principal of which are as follow:

1. Angels, good and bad. Good angels are the ministers of God that do his pleasure; these stand continually before him, wait his orders, hearken to the voice of his commandments, and are ready to perform any service

he shall enjoin them, or send them to do; "These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth", into the several parts of the world, when sent by him, to execute his will and pleasure; they are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who are heirs of salvation"; to guard and protect them, and do many good offices for them, as has been observed in a preceding chapter; see (Ps. 103:19,20; Zech. 6:5; Heb. 1:14). Evil angels are also sometimes employed in the affairs of providence; either for the inflicting of punishment on wicked men, or for the correction and chastisement of the people of God. They were made use of in the plagues of Egypt; for the Psalmist says, God "cast" upon the "Egyptians the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, by sending evil angels among them" (Ps. 78:49). In the execution of what particular plagues they were concerned it is not easy to say; probably they were sent at the time of the plague of darkness, to terrify and frighten, and add to the horror of that dreadful scene. An evil spirit offered himself to be a lying spirit, in the mouths of Ahab's prophets, which he had leave to be, and thereby brought about, in providence, the death of that prince, in a battle at Ramothgilead, as was foretold (1 Kings 22:21-34). Satan, the adversary of good men, obtained leave from the Lord, to destroy the substance, family, and health of Job; which was granted for the chastisement of him, and for the trial of his faith and patience. The same malicious spirit put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray his Lord, as was foretold; whereby the crucifixion of Christ, according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, was effected; and by that the redemption and salvation of men. The coming of antichrist, was after the working, and through the efficacy of Satan, by divine permission, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders; with which so many things in providence have been so closely connected for more than a thousand years past, and will be to the end of his reign.

2. Kings, princes, and civil magistrates, good and bad, have been, and are, instruments in the hands of God, for the executing of his providences in the world; the powers that be, are ordained of God, and are ministers of his, to some for good, who do good and behave well; to others for evil, for vengeance, to execute wrath upon them (Rom. 13:1,4), and because they have their power and authority, their commission and capacity from God, and are his vicegerents, and act under him, and represent him, and are representatives of him; hence they are called gods (Ps. 82:6). "By him good kings reign, and princes decree justice"; from him they have wisdom and capacity to make good laws, and power to put them in execution, for the good of men; such an one was David, raised up by God to fulfil his will; there have been few of this sort; but some there have been, and more there will

be in the latter day, when kings shall be nursing fathers to Zion, and queens nursing mothers; the seven angels that shall have the vials of God's wrath to pour forth on the antichristian states to their destruction, are seven Christian kings, or protestant princes, who will have a commission from God to do that work. Evil kings, however, such who have had no true knowledge of God, have been raised up, and made use of in providence, to do great things in it; either for the good of the church and people of God, as Cyrus king of Persia, whom the Lord girded, though he knew him not, and held his right hand to subdue nations, and particularly Babylon; that he might be in a capacity, and have an opportunity of letting go the captive Jews in it, and of delivering them from their bondage, and of giving them liberty to rebuild Jerusalem, and the temple in it, as was foretold of him two hundred years before he was born (Isa. 44:28; 45:1-13). And sometimes wicked princes have been used as scourges of God's people, and for the correction of them; as Sennacherib king of Assyria; of whom it is said; "O Assyria, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation!" That is, the indignation of God, the execution of it, was put into his hands, as a rod and staff, to chastise the people of the Jews for their hypocrisy and other sins, which were provoking to God; "Howbeit he", the Assyrian monarch, "meaneth not so; neither doth his heart think so", that he is an instrument, in the hand of God, to correct his people; "but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off, nations not a few", to gratify his ambition, pride, and cruelty (Isa. 10:5-7). So the ten kings, who have given their kingdoms to the antichristian beast, and become vassals to him, God put it into their hearts to do it, to fulfil his will in providence, which they knew nothing of (Rev. 17:17). And Psammon, an Egyptian philosopher, made use of this as an argument of divine providence, showing that all men were governed by God, since in everything that ruled and governed, there was something divine.

3. Ministers of the word, and masters of families, are, in their respective stations, instruments in the execution of the affairs of providence. The work of ministers lies much in convincing men of sin, and in turning them from it, and directing them in the way of their duty, as well as in the way of salvation; and it has a very close connection with the providence of God, which is exercised therein and thereby. Masters of families, both by their instructions and examples, are very serviceable in providence, to those that are under them; and, indeed, every man, in whatsoever station he is, has a work to do, which, in providence, is ordered and disposed to answer some end or another.

4. Even irrational creatures are employed in providence to execute some parts of it; the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea,

being at the beck and command of the great Creator of them. The noisome beast is one of God's four judgments which God has sometimes inflicted on wicked men; this he threatened the Jews with in case of disobedience to him (Ezek. 14:21; Lev. 26:22), two she bears, by divine direction, came out of a wood, and tore in pieces two and forty children, for mocking a prophet of the Lord; and lions were sent among the idolatrous Samaritans, to punish them for their idolatry (2 Kings 2:24; 17:25), nay, not only creatures of such bulk and strength have been made use of in providence, but even the meanest and most minute, as flies, frogs, lice, and locusts, which were four of the plagues of Egypt; and the latter is called the Lord's army, and his great camp, which sometimes have a commission to destroy a whole country, and strip it of herbs and plants, and every green thing (Joel 2:11), the fowls of the air, the ravens, those voracious creatures, were employed in providence, to carry bread and flesh, morning and evening, to the prophet Elijah; and the fishes of the sea also have been made use of; God prepared a fish to swallow up Jonah when he was cast into the sea, and he spake unto it, commanded and gave it orders to throw him upon the shore again; and a fish furnished Peter with a piece of money to pay the tribute for himself and his Master.

5. Inanimate creatures, the various meteors in the air, are under the direction of providence, and subservient to it. God has his treasures of snow and hail, which he reserves against the day of trouble, against the day of battle and war (Job 38:22,23), and which artillery of heaven he sometimes plays upon the inhabitants of the earth; hail was one of the plagues of Egypt by which, not only grass, herbs, plants, and trees were battered down, but both cattle and men destroyed; and in a battle with the Canaanites, in Joshua's time, more of them were killed by hail stones from heaven, than by the Israelites; and sometimes others of the meteors are made use of in a way of mercy, as those mentioned in a way of judgment; so snow and rain, by commission, descend on the earth to refresh it, and make it fruitful, whereby it brings forth what is beneficial to man and beast: in short, every meteor in the heavens is at the command of God, and does his will; "Fire and hail, snow and vapor, stormy wind fulfilling his word" (Ps. 148:8).

Now, whatever good or evil come to the children of men, by any and all of these instruments, are not to be attributed to them, but to the God of providence, who makes use of them to bring about his designs. All the good things of life, the wealth and riches men are possessed of, let them come by them in what way they may, by inheritance, by bequest, or by their own industry, yet all must be ascribed to God; "Riches and honour come of thee", says David (I Ch 29:12 he had amassed together a vast quantity of riches, great part of which, at least, he got by his victories over the Moabites,

Syrians, &c. But who gave him the victory? God; and therefore, as he ascribes his military honour and glory, so his riches to him; in like manner as Job, through the providence of God, became the greatest man in the East for worldly substance, as well as other things; so by the same providence he lost all; and though the Sabeans and Chaldeans were the instruments of it, he does not impute it to them, nor to Satan, who instigated them to it; but to the Lord: saying, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!" (Job 1:21).

IV. The various parts and branches, or acts of providence, of which it consists, are next to be considered; and they are chiefly these two, conservation, or preservation of all things created, and the government of them; or the wise and orderly disposal of them, to answer the ends for which they are made and preserved.

First, Conservation, or preservation of creatures, and the sustentation of them in their being; which is expressed by these several phrases, "Thou preservest them all"; that is, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and seas, and all therein (Neh. 9:6). "Upholding all things by the word of his power"; that is, the worlds made by him (Heb. 1:2,3). By him all things consist, even all things created by him in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible (Col. 1:16,17). It may be proper to consider the necessity of God's sustaining and preserving the creatures made by him; and then show to what and to whom this preservation extends and reaches.

I. That the sustentation and preservation of the creatures in their being, is of God, and must be so, and which may be proved,

(1). From the nature and perfections of God, particularly his independence. God is an independent Being; all creatures depend on him, but he on none; "Of him, through him, and to him are all things" (Rom. 11:36). If creatures could or do support and preserve themselves in their being, they would be independent, and then there would be more independents than one, and so more gods than one; which cannot be admitted; there is but one potentate, God over all, on whom all depend.

(2). From the nature of creatures, which is to be dependent on the Creator; he that gives them life and breath, gives them all things for the support and preservation thereof; yea, in himself they live and move and have their being; he not only grants them life and favour, but his visitation preserves their spirits; and this is true of all the creatures that have life and breath and motion; all depend upon God for the continuance of them; and even of rational creatures, "he holdeth our soul in life", in union with the body, in which it lives (Acts 17:25,28; Job 10:12; Ps. 66:9).

(3). From the weakness of creatures to support and preserve themselves.

If any creature could preserve itself, it might be thought that man could; but he cannot; he cannot preserve himself from disorders and diseases of body; if he could, he would not be attended with them: he cannot preserve himself from death; could he, none would ever die; but there is no man that hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death, to keep it off from him; there is no discharge in that war (Eccl. 8:8), nor can any man preserve his brother, friend, or near relation, so as that they "should live for ever, and see no corruption"; for then none, for whom an affectionate regard is had, would ever die; nay, men cannot preserve their cattle, in which the chief substance of some men lies; could they, these would always be in good plight and case, and stand, and never fail; their sheep would continue to bring forth thousands, and their oxen would be always strong to labour (Ps. 49:7,9; 144:13,14).

(4). The same power that was put forth in creation, is required and is necessary, for the preservation of the creatures made; eternal power was exerted, and is to be seen in the things that are made, and by the same almighty power all things are upheld (Rom. 1:20; Heb. 1:3), hence creation and preservation are so closely connected (Neh. 9:6), and, indeed, preservation is no other than a continued creation.

(5). Was God to withdraw his supporting hand and preserving power and influence, creatures would soon come to destruction and perish; the whole fabric of the world would at once fall to pieces; "The earth, and all the inhabitants of it, are dissolved", that is, they would be, were it not for what follows, "I bear up the pillars of it" (Ps. 75:3). Creatures, while God supports and supplies them with his hand of providence, they live; but when he hides his face, or withdraws his hand, they are troubled, die, and return to their dust (Ps. 104:27-29). Job was sensible of this, that he was held in life by the hand of God; he therefore desires he would "let loose his hand", let go his hold of him, and then he knew he should drop and die, for which he was solicitous (Job 6:9).

(6). The whole world is a building, and God is the architect of it; "He that built all things is God"; but this building differs from any building of man. A man may erect an edifice, and when he has done, leave it to itself, to stand or fall; and it does stand without him, and often-times subsists many years after the architect is dead; the reason of which is, that such an edifice is only the effect of art; the builder does not make the materials of it, the stone and the timber; he finds them made to his hand; he only figures them for his purpose, and puts them together; and this is all that is necessary for him to do. But God, the great architect, has not only put together the world, and all things in it, in the beautiful order he has; but he has made the very matter of

which it consists, and for the support of that his almighty power that created it, is requisite and necessary.

(7). Every creature is made for some end, and therefore it is necessary it should be preserved and continued until that end is answered; "The Lord hath made all things for himself"; for his own glory (Prov. 16:4), wherefore it may be strongly concluded, that as God has made all things to answer some subordinate ends to one another, and ultimately for his own glory; he will, as it is necessary he should, preserve them, that such an end may be answered, as it is, in fact; "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord!" (Ps. 145:10).

2. To what and to whom this preservation extends and reaches. It includes all the creatures God has made; the phrases by which it is expressed, as before observed, show this; which declare that God preserves them "all"; that he upholds "all" things, and that by him "all" things consist; the world in general, and every individual in it; "0 Lord, thou preservest man and beast" (Ps. 36:6), yea, every other creature.

(1). Some of the individuals of the creation are sustained and preserved, as they were from the beginning; the "prima materia", the first matter, of which all things were made, still continues; for matter is never annihilated, though it passes into different forms and figures. The whole world, which was made of it, is so established, as that it cannot be moved (Ps. 93:1; 96:10), the form, figure, and fashion of it pass away, but the matter and substance of it remain. The ordinances of the heavens, and the heavens themselves, are as they were when first created; the sun is supported in its being, continued in its motion, and constantly supplied with light and heat, which it continually emits; for nothing is hid, as from the light, so neither from the heat of it; the stars, everyone of them, keep their place, their station, or course; because that God is "strong in power", who sustains and preserves them, "not one faileth" (Isa. 40:26), for what are called falling stars, are not stars, but meteors kindled by the air, which burn and blaze awhile, and then run and fall. A new star, so called, because not seen before, sometimes appears, but no one is lost. The heavens God has established by his understanding and power, so that they remain as they were; and though it is said they "shall perish, wax old as a garment, and as a vesture be changed and folded" (Prov. 3:19; Ps. 102:25,26; Heb.. 1:11,12), yet as a garment folded up still remains, though in a different form; so the heavens will not perish, as to matter and substance, but be changed, as to form, quality, and use, in which respect they will be new and continue; and the same may be said of the earth; for God "has laid the foundations of it, that it should not be removed for ever" (Ps. 104:5), and though it underwent some change at the universal deluge, so that the apostle distinguishes the earth that then was, from that which now is, yet

as to substance it is the same; and though at the general conflagration, the earth, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up, and a new earth will rise up out of it; yet the same as to matter and substance, only different as to form, an earth without a sea; and as to quality, being purified and refined; and as to use, only to be inhabited by righteous persons (2 Pet. 3:5-7, 10-13; Rev. 21:1). Angels and the souls of men, are preserved in being, as they were first created; angels die not, nor do the souls of men, when their bodies do, but survive them, and live in a separate state till the resurrection.

(2). Some of the individuals of creatures, which are subject to corruption and death, are yet preserved, as long as it is the pleasure of God; as the beasts of the field and the bodies of men; for "he preserveth man and beast" (Ps. 36:6), the brute creatures wait upon him, and he gives them food for their sustenance, by which they are supported; and then when he pleases he takes away their breath and they perish. Man springs up like a flower, and flourishes for a while, and then is cut down; God sends him into the world to do his will, or to do some work by him, and when that is done, he changes his countenance, and sends him away (Ps. 104:28,29; Job 14:20), but though the individuals of various sorts of creatures die, yet they are preserved and continued in their species; thus, though herbs, and plants, and trees, wither and seem to be dead, or are dead in the winter season; yet in the spring those that were withered revive; or, if dead, others spring up in their room, or are raised up by seed; so that there is a constant succession of vegetables. Cattle, and fowls, and fishes, though consumed in great numbers for the use of man, or on other accounts; yet their species is propagated by them, so that there is the same sort of creatures of all kinds, as were at the first creation; and though thousands of men die every day, in one place or another, all put together, yet still a race of men is continued; "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth for ever", and is full of inhabitants (Eccl. 1:4).

Secondly, The other branch of providence is government, or the wise and orderly disposal of all creatures, to answer the ends for which they are made and preserved. God is the Governor of the whole universe; and he has a right to govern it, who is the Creator of it; the kingdom of nature is his, and so is the kingdom of providence; and he is the Governor among the nations; his government is very extensive, all creatures are subject to him; his kingdom rules over all, and it is an everlasting one; and his dominion endures throughout all generations (Ps. 22:28; Ps. 103:19; 145:13). And as the government of the world is a branch of providence; so from the wise and orderly disposition of things in it, it may be strongly concluded there is a Providence; or that there is a God, who by his providence governs, guides,

orders, and directs all thing in the world. For, as Cicero observes, if a man comes into an house, or a school, or a court of judicature, and takes notice of the order, manner, and discipline of things observed therein, he must conclude within himself, there is some one who presides there, and who is obeyed; and much more in such motions, in such vicissitudes and orders, and of so many and such great things, in which there is never any failure, one must needs conclude, that such motions of nature are governed by an intelligent Being.

1. Inanimate creatures are governed, and guided, and directed by the providence of God, to do those things for which they were created, and so answer the ends of their creation; there is a law of nature, as has been before observed, impressed upon such creatures, which they constantly obey; there is an inclination of nature in them to such and such actions, which they perpetually follow; so the sun naturally pursues his course, and takes both his daily and yearly circuit from one end of the heavens to the other, and exactly knows and observes his rising and setting; there is an obediential power and influence, by which creatures without life and sense are actuated, and to which they attend with as much precision, as if they heard the order, and understood the will of their Creator; thus the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and fall upon the earth, by direction; that drinks in the rain that comes upon it, receives the seed cast into it, cherishes and fructifies it, and throws it up again; whereby it brings forth seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; and so in numerous other instances.

2. Animate creatures, but irrational, are governed, guided, and directed in providence, by an instinct of nature, placed in them by their Creator, to such actions as are agreeable to their nature, and from which they scarce ever swerve; thus with what art and skill do birds build their nests? With what tenderness do they cherish and provide food for their young? That little creature the ant, though it has no "guide, overseer, or ruler", no visible and external one, yet "provides its meat in the summer, and gathers its food in harvest"; an example this of industry and diligence, care and foresight, to human creatures; this is one of the "four little things" on earth Solomon speaks of, which, though little, are exceeding wise, through an instinct in nature, put into them by the God of nature and providence. The "ants", he says, "are a people not strong", far from it, very weak, "yet prepare their meat in the summer" against winter; "the conies are but a feeble folk", yet are so wise under the direction of providence, and by an instinct in nature, as to "make their houses in the rocks", to shelter them from danger and hurt; "the locusts have no king", to command and direct them, "yet they go forth all of them by bands", march in rank and order, like a well disciplined army; "the

spider taketh hold with her hands", on the thread of her webs, she spins, and is in kings' "palaces", where, though her webs are often destroyed, she weaves them again (Prov. 6:7,8; 30:25-27). Birds of passage, as the stork, the turtle, the crane, and the swallow, know the appointed times of their going and coming, and exactly observe them (Jer. 8:7). Multitudes of instances of this kind might be given.

3. Rational creatures, as angels and men, are governed in a moral way, by a law, which for substance is the same to both, according to their different nature and circumstances; particularly men have either the law and light of nature to guide them, or a written law to direct them; and according as they behave towards it, they are dealt with; to those that are good, and do good, it is well with them, now and hereafter; and for the present, God makes all things work together for their good; to the evil, and them that do evil, it goes ill with them, and they shall eat the fruit of their doings, now, or in the world to come. And there is a concourse of providence which attends all men, all their actions, yea, even their words and thoughts (Prov. 16:1,9; 29:21), all which are overruled by providence, to answer some end or another; yea, even evil actions themselves, as in the case of Joseph's brethren selling him into Egypt; they, in so doing, thought evil against him, and did evil in it; but God meant it for good, and overruled it for that purpose, to save many people alive (Gen. 50:20), but of this more hereafter. Moreover, men are governed as rational creatures, in a political way; kings and princes, as has been before observed, are instruments by whom God governs and administers this part of the affairs of providence; he sets up kings and judges at his pleasure, and enjoins men obedience to them; who are ministers of his, and through the power and authority they are entrusted with, are terrors to evildoers, and a praise to them that do well. I proceed to consider,

V. The object of providence; which is the whole universe, all the creatures of it, and whatever is done in it.

First, The whole inanimate creation, or creatures without life, whether in the heavens or in the earth, are subject to divine providence, and under the direction of it, and act according to ancient and original laws, which, the Author of them has imposed upon them, and from, which they do not swerve.

l. The luminaries of the heavens, the sun, moon, and stars, these were made at first for various uses, for signs and seasons, and for days and years, and to give light to the earth by day and by night; and they are continued and employed by divine providence, for the said purposes and uses for which they were created. The sun is not only supported in its being, directed in its course, and continued to perform its office, as has been observed, but it

daily sheds its benign influences upon the earth, to make it fruitful; hence we read of "precious fruits brought forth by the sun" (Deut. 33:14 and by the order of God in providence, all men partake of the benefits of it; for "he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good" (Matthew 5:45), it is at his command and beck, he can stop it at his pleasure, and hide it from men; "He commandeth the sun, and it riseth not"; or, is not seen for days together; he causes it to go down at noon, as it seems to do in an eclipse, "and darkens the earth in a clear day" (Job 9:7; Amos 8:9), the same may be said of the moon, that is supported, continued, and directed in providence to answer the ends of its creation; it was "appointed for seasons", to distinguish times, as it does; to give light by night, of which use it is, and to influence the earth and seas; hence we read of precious things brought forth by the moon; and that it is at the command of the God of providence, appears by its being stopped and stayed, when the sun was, in the days of Joshua; the stars are the hosts of heaven, God's militia, which he sometimes employs in providence, in favour of his people, and against their enemies; "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera" (Judges 5:20), they are of use, in providence, to mariners on the mighty waters; the loss of which was sensibly felt by the apostle Paul, and those with him, when for many days neither sun nor stars appeared (Acts 27:20), and when such is the case, then it is that God "sealeth up the stars" (Job 9:7).

2. The meteors in the heavens are under the direction of providence; the clouds and winds, hail, rain, snow, and dew, thunder and lightning: the providence of God is greatly concerned in the ordering, directing, and managing of the clouds; "He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them" (Job 26:8), amazing it is, that such a body of waters should be wrapped up in so thin a garment as a cloud is, which is only thickened air; and that the cloud should not be rent and burst with the weight of the waters in it; and that these should not fall at once, in the vast quantity of which they are, which should they, would wash away the increase of the earth, and destroy men and cattle on it. But God, in his infinite wisdom and providence, causes them to fall in gentle showers, and in small drops, as if they passed through a sieve or colander, and so refresh and make the earth fruitful (Job 36:27-29). Elihu asks, "Can any understand the spreadings of the clouds?" How from a small appearance, like that of a man's hand, on a sudden they spread themselves all over the heavens; as in the times of Ahab (1 Kings 18:44,45), and elsewhere he asks, "Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge?" (Job 37:16), how such vast bodies, holding such large quantities of water, are poised in the air, without turning aside, or falling at once; but move on

evenly from place to place, and fall on those parts where in providence they are directed.

3. The winds are also at the dispose of providence: God has his treasures of them, and he brings them out from thence when he pleases, and holds them in his fists, restrains them, or lets them loose at his pleasure; he commands and raises the stormy wind, and bids it blow, and it obeys his orders, and fulfils his word; and he makes a weight for it, and causes it to subside (Ps. 135:7; 107:25,29; 148:8 Prov. 30:4; Job 28:25). And as all this is the work of providence, and which God only can do, so it is a clear proof of the Deity of our Lord; who, when he rebuked the winds and sea, and there was a calm, when before a violent tempest, the men in the ship with him said, "What manner of man is this, that the winds and the sea obey him?" (Matthew 8:26,27). Hail is at the command of God, and which he sometimes in providence makes use of to the hurt and destruction of wicked men, as the Egyptians and Canaanites, as before observed, and will be one of the plagues on the antichristian states (Rev. 16:21), and we frequently hear of damages by it. On the other hand, in a way of mercy, God sends dew, and rain, and snow upon the earth, to water it, and make it fruitful; and which are what none of the vanities of the Gentiles can give; rain is a wonderful blessing of providence, and falls by divine direction, sometimes on one part of the earth, and sometimes on another, as God pleases to dispose of it to the benefit of it (Amos 4:7,8). Thunder and lightning are of God; lightning is directed by him, and it runs from one end of the heavens to the other, and very many and wonderful are the effects of it; thunder is the voice of God; "Canst thou thunder with a voice like him?" (Job 40:9). "The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thundereth"; and strange effects are produced by it (Ps. 29:3-9). God sometimes causes this his voice to be heard, to awaken and terrify secure sinners and atheistical persons, and let them know there is a God in the heavens that takes notice of them, and to whom they are accountable; and sometimes God in his providence does execution upon them this way; thus with a great thunder the Lord discomfited the army of the Philistines, in the days of Samuel (1 Sam. 7:10).

4. The providence of God is not only concerned with things inanimate in the heavens, but also in the earth, the various metals and minerals there; such as gold, silver, brass, iron, &c. "There is a vein for silver, and a place for gold iron is taken out of the earth, and brass is molten out of the stones" (Job 28:1,2). God has made a provision of these metals for the use of men, and bestows them on them in providence; "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord" (Hag 2:8), and he gives them to whom he pleases, and as much of them as seems meet to him; and directs men how to employ

them and improve them in trade and commerce, and in several arts and manufactories.

5. The sea, as well as all that are therein, is at his command; this unruly and unwieldy creature is managed by him at his pleasure, as easily as an infant by its nurse; he puts on its garment, wraps it in a swaddling band; he has broke up its decreed place for it, and has set bars, and doors, and bounds unto it, to stop and stay its proud waves from proceeding any further; he has placed that small creature the sand for a boundary of it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, as it were in scorn and contempt of this their boundary; yet notwithstanding their haughty airs, they cannot prevail and pass over (Job 38:8-11; Jer. 5:22; Ps. 65:7).

Secondly, Animate creatures, or creatures with life; though they have only either a vegetative life, or a sensitive animal life, are under the care of divine providence; vegetables, herbs, plants, and trees, grass for the cattle, and herb for the service of man; and of great use, profit, and advantage, are they to both; when they are withered, or they do not spring up, not only the "beasts groan, the herds of cattle are perplexed, and the flocks of sheep are made desolate, because they have no pasture" (Joe 1:18), but men sensibly feel the loss of them; for God sometimes in providence turns "a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein" (Ps. 107:34). As every spire of grass proclaims a God, so it also declares a providence, and instructs men to trust therein; "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin"; but being raised by providence, they thrive, and are clothed with a beauty and glory, which Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed with: "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field", with such verdure and gaiety, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Matthew 6:28-30). Other creatures that live a sensitive, animal life, yet irrational, are cared for in providence; "He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens that cry" (Ps. 147:9). All the creatures look up unto him, wait upon him, and he gives them their meat in due season; the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air, God knows them all, and provides for them, and takes care of them, and preserves them; not a sparrow falls to the ground without him, without his knowledge, will, and providence; and the doctrine of providence, and trust in it, are to be learned from these creatures; "Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them; are ye not much better than they?" (Matthew 6:26). The heathens acknowledge the providence of God, as regarding the most mean and minute. Plato says, that things small and great are not neglected by God, neither through ignorance nor sloth; and that

such an imagination is false and wicked; so Chrysippus. Indeed, some are for exempting creatures mean and small, as well as trivial things, from the providence of God, being of the Stoic's mind, who said, "Dii magna curant, parva negligunt"; the gods take care of great things, but neglect small ones: but what is more mean and worthless than a sparrow? And yet under the care of the providence of God; and what smaller than some insects, as flies, &c. And yet as the wisdom and power of God are seen in creating them, they are no less displayed in the use he makes of them, in doing great things by them; as in the plagues of Egypt; and if they are not unworthy of his creation, they cannot be unworthy of his providence.

Thirdly, Rational creatures, angels and men, are more especially the objects of divine providence. Angels good and bad. Good angels are not only upheld in their beings by God, but are directed by his providence, and ordered by his will, here and there; and he does according to his will among them, even in the armies of the heavens, which they are (Dan. 4:35). He orders them to do his pleasure in the several parts of the world, gives them a charge over his people, to keep and guard them in all their ways. Christ says, he could have asked twelve legions of them from his Father, and have had them (Ps. 91:11; Matthew 26:53). But of the officers and employment of good angels we have treated elsewhere. Evil angels are under the restraints and checks of providence; they are held in the chains of it, nor can they go any where, nor any further, nor do anything but what they have leave for; as the cases of Job, and of the man possessed of a legion, and of Peter, show (Job 1:11,12 2:5,6; Mark 5:10-13; Luke 22:31) but of the providence of God, respecting angels in their first estate, and at their fall, I shall treat more particularly hereafter; and proceed to consider the providence of God concerning men, men in general, and the people of God in particular.

First, Men in general. As all men have their life and breath, and all things, from God; they live, and move, and have their being in him; he looks down from heavens for them, and preserves them; "Thou preservest man and beast"; as all sorts of beasts, so the whole of mankind (Acts 17:25,28; Ps. 33:13,14; 36:6), the providence of God is concerned in production of every man into being, and attends him in every stage and step of life, even unto death.

I. It is concerned in the production of them into being; it was the will of God, declared from the beginning, that there should be a propagation of the human species; God made man, male and female, for that purpose, joined them together in marriage, and enjoined them the first law of nature; "Increase and multiply"; and blessed this ordinance and institution of his to the peopling of the old world; and when that was overrun with wickedness,

and destroyed by him for it with a flood, he by his providence preserved eight persons in an ark; and renewed the original law, "increase and multiply"; and by them repeopled the whole earth; and though ever since one generation of men has been going off by death, yet another generation comes and succeeds by birth; so it has been, is, and will be to the end of the world. To be a little more particular; the providence of God is concerned in the birth of every man, with respect to time when, place where, and persons of whom he is born; for as each of these are fixed in the purposes of God, the providence of God exactly executes those purposes (Eccl. 3:1,2; Acts 17:26; Gen. 33:5 48:9), the conception of man in the womb, the formation of every member of the body, in the curious and wonderful manner in which they are wrought, and the whole progress thereof, are under the direction of providence, and owing to it (Job 10:8,9; Ps. 94:9; 139:14-16), the production of the soul in, and the union of it to the embryo, when in a fit and proper state to receive it, whereby it is quickened, are performed by the same hand (Ps. 33:15; Zech. 12:1; Acts 17:25), and when all things are ripe for the birth, God, by his power and providence, takes it out of the womb, and brings it forth into the world; for to him is this act ascribed, rather than to the midwife. Job, in his distress, complains of it, and wishes it had not been; but the Psalmist blesses and adores the providence of God for it (Job 10:18; Ps. 22:8,9; 71:6), and how wonderful does the providence of God appear in the case of a newly born infant, that when it cannot help itself, nor tell its wants, care is taken that such things should be done for it in that instant which are necessary (Ezek. 16:4), and that as it has been marvelously fed and nourished, in the dark cell of nature, as soon as it is brought to the light, the mother's breasts are filled with milk, to which it has a natural desire; and her heart is filled with tenderness to it, to do all that is in her power for it, and rather suffer herself than that should want; this is all owing to divine providence (Ps. 22:8; Isa. 49:15).

2. The providence of God attends men in every stage of life into which they come, and in every step in it, as in the first moment of their birth, so throughout their infancy; providing things necessary for them, and preserving them from many dangers the infant state is exposed unto: it appears in their education, the foundation of which is laid in childhood; some have a better education than others, by which their tender minds are opened and improved; and some have greater capacities to receive and take in the instructions given them; but all have either more or less to fit them for the stations in life which are designed for them; all that come into the world are enlightened with the light of nature and reason; there is a rational spirit in every man; and the inspiration of the Almighty gives him understanding

in natural things, and teaches him, and makes him wiser than the beasts of the earth, and the fowls of the heaven; whereby he is qualified, in a course of time, for such employments in life he is designed unto (Job 32:8; 35:11), and when fit for business, the providence of God is greatly seen in directing to such callings, occupations, and stations in life they are fittest for; and it is easily discerned in giving to each an inclination to such and such services, some to one, and some to another; some choose an employment on the sea, others on land; some take to agriculture or husbandry, in one branch of it or another; some to mechanic trades and manufactories, of different sorts: in all which the providence of God greatly appears; for as it is in the natural body, "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? So it is in the body politic, if all chose and were concerned in one sort of business and employment, that would soon be overdone, and the rest neglected; the consequence of which would be distress and confusion. But God, in his providence, has ordered every man's calling for his own particular good, and the good of the public; therefore, "let every man abide in the same calling wherein he is called" (1 Cor. 7:20,24 ;12:17) the places of abode where every man is settled, to do the business of his calling, are under the direction of the providence of God, who has "determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of men's habitation". God not only at the first peopling of the world, divided to the nations their inheritance, and set the bounds of the people; particularly after the flood, disposed of the sons of Noah, and their posterity, some in one part of the world, and some in another; but he has appointed to every man the place of his settlement, and in his providence directs unto it (Deut. 32:8; Acts 17:26). The marriage state of life, into which most men enter, is too important an affair to escape the providence of God; there is more truth in that common saying, than many are aware of, that "marriages are made in heaven"; that is, they are appointed of God, and brought about in providence; and very often in a most remarkable manner; instances of this may be observed in the direction of Abraham's servant, sent to take a wife for Isaac; and in the case of Boaz and Ruth (Gen. 24:14,15,21,27; Ruth 4:13,14). When persons are born into the world, and set up in business in it, their success therein depends on the providence of God, which is different, to some greater, to others less; some rise early, and sit up late, and it is as much as they can do to live; others, through the blessing of God on their diligence and industry, become rich; which is not to be ascribed to chance and fortune, but to divine providence (Ps. 127:2; Prov. 10:4,22), for poverty and riches are both in the hand of God, and he disposes of them at his pleasure; "The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all", both rich and poor; not the

maker of them as men, though he is, which is an observation anyone could make, as well as the wise man; but the maker of them both as rich and poor; this is an observation worthy of the wisest of men; for "the Lord maketh poor and maketh rich". Agur was sensible of this, and therefore desires that God would give him neither poverty nor riches, for reasons he mentions; see (Prov. 22:2; 30:8; 1 Sam. 2:7). All afflictions, of whatsoever sort, are under the direction of providence; they do not spring out of the ground, or come by chance, but by the appointment of God; and are overruled, in providence, to answer some ends or other; be they personal or family, or crosses, losses, and disappointments in trade and business, they are all sent, and set and bounded by the providence of God; prosperity and adversity are set by him, the one against the other; so that men can find nothing after him (Job 5:6; 23:14; Eccl. 7:14). All diseases of bodies are the servants of God, are at his beck and command, and sent here and there to do his pleasure; he says to one, go, and it goes, and to another, come, and it comes; he sends them on, and calls them off, as he pleases; he chastens with sore pain, consumes their flesh, weakens their strength in the way, and brings near to the grave; "These things worketh God", in his providence, "often-times with men" (Job 33:29). And as the providence of God attends men in their infancy, childhood, youth, and manhood, and in all circumstances relative to them, in the course of these, so in old age; he that has been the guide of their youth, and conducted them in every part of life, is the staff of old age, and will not then cast off, leave, nor forsake; he carries from the womb even to old age and hoary hairs (Ps. 71:9,18; Isa. 46:3,4). The term of life, as it is fixed by God, it is finished by providence, exactly in the manner, and at the time appointed; some die a violent, and others, for the most part, a natural death; some in the prime of life, others in old age; some suddenly, and in their full strength, while others drag on a tedious life, and consume and pine away gradually; but all come by the appointed means, and in the appointed manner, and at the appointed time, under the direction of providence (1 Sam. 26:10; Job 21:23-25; Eccl. 3:2). Nor can the term of life be protracted beyond the bounds of days, months, and years which God has fixed; nor be shortened, as not to be reached unto (Job 14:5). Nor are the fifteen years added to Hezekiah's days, an objection to this; since that addition was not to the days which God had appointed he should live, but to his own, which he thought were at an end; when he had the sentence that he should die, being stricken with a mortal disease, which none but God could cure him of: nor what is said of some, that they die before their time (Eccl. 7:17), since that does not respect God's time, but their own time; what, according to the course of nature, humanly speaking, they might have lived to; and which both they and their friends

might expect they would; the passage respects such who by capital crimes fall under the notice and vengeance of the civil magistrate, and so come to what is usually styled an untimely end. And when some are said not to live out half their days; these live out all the days they are designed in providence to live; and yet live but half of those which, according to their own, and the expectation of their friends, and according to the common term of life, threescore years and ten, it might be supposed they would have lived; so that if a person dies under five and thirty years of age, he may be said to live not half the days of man, though he has lived all the days that were allotted to him in providence; see (Ps. 55:23; 90:10).

Secondly, There is a special providence, which is concerned with the people of God in particular; God is "the Saviour of all men", in a providential way, but "especially of those that believe" (1 Tim. 4:10), not only is the eye of love, grace, and mercy, on those that fear the Lord, but his eye of providence. The providence of God is signified by seven eyes, that run to and fro through the earth, to denote the perfection and extensiveness of it; and it takes this course, particularly that God may "show himself strong on the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him" (Ps. 33:18; Zech. 4:10; 2 Chron. 16:9). Many are the instances on divine record, of the special providence of God respecting the saints; as Abraham and Sarah, who being called from their native country to a strange land, through which they travelled with safety, though the Canaanite was in it; and were eminently preserved both in Egypt and Gerar; Abraham, when his life, as he supposed, was in danger, and Sarah, when her chastity was ready to be violated (Gen. 12:1,6,10; 12:12,13,20; 20:6,15,16). Isaac, in obedience to the divine command, Abraham took, and was about to sacrifice, all things being ready for that purpose, and his hand stretched out to give the fatal blow; when he was restrained from it by a voice from heaven, and was directed to a ram caught in a thicket, to offer in his room; and this providence being at mount Moriah, occasioned a proverb in future ages, for the encouragement of faith in times of distress; "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen" (Gen. 22:2,10,11,14). Jacob is another instance of the special care of divine providence, in directing him to flee from the wrath of his brother, who intended to kill him; and in preserving him in his journey, and bringing him safe to Laban's family; in prospering him in it, and in securing him from his fury, when he departed from him; in guarding him with an host of angels when his brother Esau came out to meet him; all which, and other providences, were remarked by him; which occurred in the way in which he was led by his God, who fed him, and protected him all his days (Gen. 27:42,43; 29:1; 30:43; 31:29,42; 32:1,2; 35:3; 48:15). Joseph, whose party-coloured coat was an emblem of

the various providences of his life, is a remarkable instance of this kind; in being preserved from the designs of his brethren upon his life; in his being sold and carried into Egypt; in the disposal of him there, and the favour he had both in Potiphar's family, and in the prison into which he was cast by him; in interpreting the dreams of two of Pharaoh's servants, which was the means of his being brought from thence into Pharaoh's presence and court; where he was advanced to the highest honour and office, next the king, and was of eminent use to the whole nation, and to his father's family (Gen. 37:3,18,21,26,27; 39:4,21,23; 41:14,41; 50:20). To observe no more, David was also remarkably the care of providence. Samuel was directed by the providence of God to anoint him king, when all his brethren, elder than he, were passed by; and by the same providence he was brought to Saul's court, and more than once was he eminently preserved from his fury; as when he threw a javelin at him, and sent messengers to beset his house, and take him; and when he pursued him in various places, and particularly when he lay with his army on one side of the mountain where David and his men were, and was just about to surround him, but was called off by a messenger that acquainted him the Philistines had invaded the land: with many other signal appearances of divine providence in his favour, both in his exile and in his wars (1 Sam. 16:13,18-23; 19:10,12; 23:26,27). But besides those instances, and many others, there is a special providence that attends all the people of God.

1. Before conversion, even as soon as they are born; this is what the apostle seems to intend in (Gal. 1:15). With respect to himself; "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb"; which cannot be understood of the separation of him in election, which was done earlier than this, even in eternity; nor of his separation from others in the effectual calling, for that was not done so early; but of his being taken under the care of divine providence in a distinguished manner, as soon as he was taken out of his mother's womb; God's eye was upon him all along, from thence to the time of his conversion, waiting to be gracious to him; see (Acts 7:58; 8:1,3; 9:1-5). Though it is not the only, nor the principal thing, that may be intended in (2 Tim. 1:9), yet it seems to be part of the sense of it, and not to be excluded from it; "Who hath saved us, and called us"; since the people of God are often saved from many imminent dangers, to which their lives are exposed before conversion; and so are saved before called, and saved to be called. Many of them are greatly preserved from the grosser sins of life before conversion, though this is not the case of all; and many are blessed with a religious education, which is a means of their preservation from scandalous sins; though this also every one has not; yet where it is, it is a providential

favour.

2. At conversion; as effectual calling itself is according to the purpose of God, as to time, place, and means; so the providence of God is concerned in the bringing of it about agreeable thereunto; there is a time fixed for it, called the time of life, and the time of love; because there is then the first appearance of both; this is sometimes in the earlier, and sometimes in the latter part of life, and is not restrained to any, but is always at the time appointed by God, and then it is providentially brought about; the time being come for the conversion of the woman of Samaria, and for the call of Zaccheus, Christ must needs go through Samaria and Jericho, when it does not appear that he had any reason to go through either, but on those accounts. The place where conversion shall be made is also fixed (Ps. 87:4-6; Acts 18:10), wherefore the providence of God is often remarkably concerned either in bringing the gospel to such places, as it was brought to Philippi, for the sake of the conversion of Lydia and her household, and of the jailer and his (Acts 16:6-12,14,15,33,34), or in bringing persons to the places where the gospel is, and casting them under the sound of it. Very remarkable and uncommon was the conversion of Onesimus, a fugitive servant, who ran away from his master, was taken up and cast into the same prison where the apostle Paul was, by whom he was begotten in his bonds, through the ministry of the gospel to him (Philemon 1:10). And as the gospel is the ordinary means of conversion, how providentially are some persons brought under it, and converted by it, led by curiosity to hear it, or with a malignant spirit to scoff at it, oppose and persecute it; and ministers, how providentially are they directed to insist on such a subject, to say such things, and drop such expressions, and which, perhaps, they thought not of before, which, accompanied with a divine power, issue in conversion. Thus Austin, losing his subject, and digressing from it, fell upon the error of the Manichees, which proved the conversion of a great man of that heresy; and at most, ministers draw the bow at a venture; it is divine providence, in a gracious manner, directs the arrow of the word to the sinner's heart, where, through the power of divine grace, it does execution.

3. After conversion the providence of God appears, as well as before, in preserving his people from many evils and dangers; angels are ministering spirits to them, have the charge of them, encompass about them, and protect them (Ps. 91:11; 34:7), in providing for their temporal good, so that they shall want no good thing fitting and convenient for them; rather than they shall suffer want God will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys (Ps. 34:9,10; 89:11; Isa. 41:17,18). And in directing them in all their ways, to take such steps as will be most for their good and the

glory of God (Ps. 37:23), and in delivering them out of their afflictions, and causing all things to work together for their good; and in being their God and guide even unto death (Rom. 8:28; Ps. 34:19; 48:14).

Fourthly, The providence of God is concerned in all actions; in everything that is done in the world, from the beginning to the end of it. God is a "God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed" (1 Sam. 2:3), not only are they known, considered, and examined by him, but he has some way or other, or in some sense or another, a concern in them; all action is from motion, and all motion comes originally from the first Mover, who is God, "in whom we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

First, All natural actions, which are common or peculiar to every creature, as flying to the fowls of the air, swimming to fishes, walking to men and beasts; all muscular motion is of God; and is continued by his providence; by which we can move from place to place, rise, walk, run, &c. Eat and drink, and do every action, and the several businesses of life.

Secondly, All necessary actions; such as either arise from the necessity of nature, or are so by the ordination and appointment of God. Some are so by the necessity of nature; as waters naturally and necessarily descend and flow; and fire naturally and necessarily burns what is combustible, when put to it; and heavy things descend, and light things ascend; they necessarily move and act according to their nature, which is preserved in them by the providence of God; and that they are under the direction of providence is clear, because they are sometimes controlled by it: so the waters rose up and stood on an heap in the Red Sea, and the river of Jordan, and made dry land for the Israelites to pass through. The nature of fire was so restrained in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, that it did not so much as singe nor scent the clothes of the three companions of Daniel, cast into it. There are other things that are necessary by the appointment of God, or must be, because he has appointed them; and, indeed, everything is necessary in this sense, because he has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass; so for instance, the sufferings of Christ being by the determinate counsel of God, were necessary; hence those phrases, ought not Christ to suffer; the Son of man "must" suffer many things; so likewise offences must come, and heresies must be; they were necessary, by a necessity of immutability; that is, they must and do unchangeably come to pass in providence; but not by a necessity of coaction, or force, on those that are the authors of them, who do what they do most freely: as the crucifiers of Christ; men could not act more freely than they did; and as those by whom offences come, they give them freely, and are pleased when they are taken. Heretics form their corrupt schemes of doctrine with their whole hearts and will, and freely spread them; so that the divine

determination, and providential bringing about of necessary actions, are consistent with the liberty of man's will. Hence,

Thirdly, All free and voluntary actions, which depend upon the free will of man, are under the direction of the providence of God. The thoughts, purposes, schemes, and determinations of the will of men, than which nothing is more free; yet these are under the influence of divine providence; "A man's heart deviseth his way"; forms schemes, which he purposes to execute; settles the method of the execution of them, according to his will; and chooses the way he proposes to walk in; "But the Lord directeth his steps", and guides him in providence to take a quite different course; "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, are from the Lord"; the thoughts of the heart, by which a man is prepared to speak his mind, are under a divine influence; as free as thought is, it is not exempt from the providence of God, which both directs and overrules it; and the answer the tongue is thereby prepared to give, is under the same influence and restraint; Balaam would willingly have given an answer to the wishes of Balak, in order to have gotten his money, but could not: when he had devised what to say, and was just ready to open his mouth to curse Israel, God put another word into his mouth; and instead of cursing, he blessed Israel. What more free and arbitrary than the heart, mind, and will of a sovereign despotic prince? Yet "the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water, he turneth it whithersoever he will"; as resolute and determined as it may be, it is in the hand of God; and it is in his power to turn it as easily as canals of water may be cut by a gardener to water his garden; or as the river Euphrates was cut by Cyrus, and its course diverted, and its waters drained; so that he could march his army into the midst of Babylon, through which it ran. So the cabinet councils of princes, in which they consult, debate, and speak their minds freely, are all overruled by the providence of God, to answer his own purposes; (see Prov. 16:1,9; 21:1).

Fourthly, All contingent actions, or such as are called chance matters, these fall under the divine providence. What may seem more a contingency, or matter of chance, than the shooting of a bird flying, and its falling to the ground? When the bow is drawn, or the piece presented and levelled, how uncertain is it whether it hits the bird or not? And yet, "One sparrow shall not fall on the ground", that is, be shot and drop on the ground, "without your Father"; without his knowledge, will, and providence (Matthew 10:29), and what is more contingent than the killing of a man unawares, as it is described (Deut. 19:4,5)? and yet the providence of God is so far concerned in such an affair, that God is said to "deliver" such a man "into the hand" of his neighbour (Ex. 21:13). What we call accidental death is providential:

what can be thought more a chance matter than the casting of a lot, how it will issue? And yet the issue, which is of God, is certain; "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord" (Prov. 16:33). The first lot mentioned in scripture is that which was cast on the account of Achan, who had stolen a Babylonish garment, and a wedge of gold; to find out which, Joshua had recourse to a lot; this was cast first for the tribe the guilty person belonged to, and it fell on the tribe of Judah; then for the family of it, and it fell on the family of the Zarhites; and next for the household, and it fell upon the household of Zabdi; and then for the person, and it fell upon Achan: and in the whole process, how remarkable is the providence of God, which directed to the tribe, to the family, to the household, and to the guilty person; for that he was so, is certain from his own confession (Joshua 7:16-20). The next lot was that which was cast for the division of the land of Canaan to the tribes of Israel; and which fell exactly agreeable to the prophecies of Jacob and Moses: thus for instance, it is suggested in both of them, that the tribe of Zebulun should have its situation by the sea (Gen. 49:13; Deut. 33:19), and by lot this situation was assigned unto it (Joshua 19:11). The third lot we read of was that cast by Saul, to find out the person that had sinned, on whose account no answer was returned by the Lord to an inquiry made; and Saul desired a perfect lot might be given between the people, and him and Jonathan; it was cast, and the people escaped; it was cast again, and it fell on Jonathan, who had tasted honey that day, contrary to the charge and oath of Saul (1 Sam. 14:40-43). Once more, Jonah fleeing from the presence of the Lord, took shipping at Joppa, for Tarshish, when a tempest arose and endangered the ship, and frightened the mariners; who supposed it was for some evil done by some among them, and therefore cast lots to find out the person, and the lot fell on Jonah. Now how careful and just was this disposition made in providence, that it might not fall upon any of the innocent mariners, but upon the guilty person; and for whom God in his providence had provided a fish to swallow him, when cast into the sea! (Jonah 1:7,17).

Fifthly, All actions and things done in the world and among men, whether good or evil, are under the direction of providence; or that is some way or other concerned in them.

First, Good actions. Those are of God, the fountain of all goodness; there is no good thing in fallen man naturally, and therefore no good thing comes out of him, nor is any good thing done by him; and without the grace of God, he can do nothing of that kind; neither think a good thought, nor do a good action, an action that is spiritually good; in this God is concerned; this is one branch of his gracious dealings in providence with men: and he

does not only uphold them in their beings, while they are doing good; for this he does to wicked men, while they are doing evil things; nor does he only give them a law, which shows them that which is good, what is to be done, and what to be avoided, and what is the perfect and acceptable will of God; to love God and their neighbour; to do nothing injurious to the glory of the one, and the good of the other: nor does he barely make use of moral persuasion by his ministers, to persuade with arguments taken from fear or love, from loss or profit, to avoid evil and do good (Deut. 30:19; 2 Cor. 5:11). But God works efficaciously in the hearts of his people, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure; he opens their hearts to attend to the word spoken to them; he bends their wills, and inclines their hearts to that which is good, and gives them power and grace to effect it; he circumcises their hearts to love him, the Lord their God; he creates them anew in Christ, that they may be capable of performing good works; for though without him they can do nothing, yet through him strengthening them, they can do all things; he puts his Spirit within them, to enable them to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments and do them. But of this more, when we come to treat of the doctrine of efficacious Grace.

Secondly, There are many evil things done in the world, in which the providence of God is concerned; and these are of two sorts, the evil of calamities, distress, and afflictions, and the evil of sin.

I. The evils of calamities, &c. And these are either more public or more private.

(1). More public; such are the calamities and distresses on nations and kingdoms, and bodies of men, and which are never without the providence of God; "I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things", in a providential way (Isa. 45:7). When peace obtains and continues in states and kingdoms, it is God that makes peace in their borders; this is a blessing of his providence; and the evil which is set in contrast with it, said to be of his creating, is war; and this, and all the calamities and distress that attend and follow it, are by the providence of God. In this sense are we to understand the prophet when he says, "Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?" (Amos 3:6), he means any public calamity, affliction, and distress; even cities themselves come to destruction, and their memorial perishes with them: where is now Thebes with its hundred gates, and Babylon, with its broad walls, and the famous Persepolis, and Jerusalem the joy of the whole earth? It cannot be thought that these cities came to destruction without the concern of providence therein: yea, where are the famous monarchies which made such a figure in the world, the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman, of which the latter only has a name, and that is

all? The fall of these, according to divine prediction, has been accomplished by divine providence. Under this head may be observed the judgments of God in the world, as the sword, famine, pestilence, earthquakes, &c. When the sword is drawn, it is God that gives it a charge, and appoints it against such a state and kingdom; and it cannot be sheathed again, and be at rest and quiet, until he gives a counterorder in providence (Jer. 47:6,7). Famine is one of God's arrows shot out of the bow of providence; wherever it is, it is of his calling for and sending. (Amos 4:6; Hag 1:11), and pestilence is another of his arrows, an arrow which flies by day and walks in darkness, and wastes at noonday by his order; concerning which he says, "I will send", or "I have sent" the pestilence among them (Jer. 29:17; Amos 4:10), and who has foretold there shall be earthquakes in divers places, as have been in our times as well as others, and cannot be thought to be without the providence of God (Matthew 24:7).

(2). There are other calamities and afflictions which are of a more private nature, and are either inflicted on wicked men by way of punishment for sin, nor can they justly complain of the providence of God as acting unrighteously by them, "Wherefore should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" (Lam. 3:39), or they are inflicted on good men in love, and as fatherly corrections and chastisements; "for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son that he receiveth" (Heb. 12:6), and this now (the afflictions of good men) is made an objection, though not justly, against the providence of God: this was the grand objection of Epicurus and his followers to divine providence, the only persons among the heathens that objected to it: because they observed that wicked men for the most part prospered, and good men, or virtuous men, as they called them, were generally afflicted and distressed; and therefore they could not believe that God concerned himself with human affairs; and this has been a stumbling to good men, which they know not how well to reconcile to the justice of God, as it was to Asaph and Jeremiah (Ps. 73:2,3,12-14; Jer. 12:1,2). But it should be observed,

5d5blbl. That wicked men, though they prosper and abound in riches, and are not seemingly in trouble as other men, yet they are not so happy as they may be thought to be; for as our Lord says, "A man's life", that is, the happiness of it, "consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15). Some have much, and have not a power to make use of it, either for their own comfort or the good of others; and where is the difference then between having and not having it? Others, on the contrary, are profuse and extravagant, and live very luxurious and debauched lives, and bring upon themselves painful or nauseous diseases, and distress of

mind; so that they have neither ease of body nor peace of conscience, but racking pain and dreadful remorses; some, their abundance will not suffer them to sleep, either through fear of losing what they have by thieves, &c. or through care contriving schemes to increase it; and some, envy seizes them and gnaws upon them, and they cannot enjoy themselves because a neighbour exceeds them in grandeur and wealth.

(2). It should be also observed that a good man, though afflicted, is not so unhappy as is imagined; he has more peace, satisfaction, and contentment in what he has, though mean and little, than the wicked rich man in all his abundance; see (Ps. 37:16; Prov. 15:16,17), besides, the good man, though poor in one sense, he is rich in a better; and is not only heir of a kingdom, but is possessed of one which cannot be moved, the kingdom of grace; he is possessed of the riches of grace, and is entitled to the riches of glory; and in the meanwhile has the love of God shed abroad in his heart, communion with God, and joy and peace unspeakable, which none can take away; and even his very afflictions work together for his good, temporal, spiritual, and eternal; and he has the presence of God, and a rich experience of his grace in them; so that he has reason to count it all joy when he falls into temptations, that is, into afflictions; for though they are not in themselves joyous, but grievous, yet they yield to them to whom they are sanctified the peaceable fruits of righteousness; so that the balance is now on the afflicted good man's side.

(3). Hereafter, in a future state, this difficulty will be quite removed, and entirely vanish, when the wicked rich man, that was clothed in purple, and fared sumptuously every day, and had his good things here, will have his evil things; and Lazarus, the afflicted man, that was clothed with rags, and covered with ulcers, and had his evil things, will now have his good things; the one will be tormented, and the other comforted; the wicked will go into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal; and then justice will shine in its true luster and glory.

2. There are the evils of fault, or sinful actions, from which the providence of God is not to be excluded. This is the greatest difficulty to be met with in the article of providence, how it should have a concern with sinful actions, or with actions to which sin is annexed, as some choose to express themselves. There are two things to be set down for certain and eternal truths, whether we are capable of reconciling them to our own satisfaction and that of others, or not; the one is, that God is not and cannot be the author of sin; the other is, that the providence of God has a concern with and in all sinful actions in some sense or another: that God is not the author of sin is most certain, there is nothing sinful in his nature; Plato says of good things there is no

other cause, but of evil things we must seek for any other cause but God: he is without iniquity, is of unspotted purity and holiness; there is nothing but good in him, and therefore nothing sinful can come from him, nor be done by him; he takes no pleasure in sin, nor in those that do it, which the authors of sin do; he cannot look upon it with approbation and delight, it is abominable and hateful to him; for he has not only forbidden it by his law, but is the avenger of it; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, come from him on every soul that does evil; wherefore "let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God" (Jam. 1:13), and on the other hand, to exclude the providence of God from all concern in the sinful actions of men, is contrary to the in-dependency of God, in whom all live and move and have their being, and of whom, through whom, and to whom all things are: creatures depend upon God, as in their being so in their operation, or they would be in action independent of him, and so there would be other independents besides him; moreover to exempt the providence of God from all concern in sinful actions, or in actions to which sin is annexed, would be to banish providence, in a good measure, out of the world; for, comparatively speaking, what is done in the world but what is sinful? For these are the all, or the chief things in the world; "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life" (1 John 2:16). Let the following things be observed for the settling of this point, and the removing of the above difficulty,

(1). That God supports men in their being, while they are sinning. This is certain; he upholds them in life, his visitation preserves their spirits; was he to withdraw his power and providence from them, they would cease to be, and become incapable of action; but this he does not; he could have struck Ananias and Sapphira dead, before they committed the sin they did, and so have prevented it; but he did not; but when they had committed it, then he did it.

(2). God, in innumerable instances, does not hinder the commission of sin, when he could do it, if he would: that he can do it is certain, because he has done it; he withheld Abimelech from sinning against him, as he told him (Gen. 20:6 and he that withheld Abimelech, could have withheld Adam, and any of his sons, from sinning, whom he has not. He restrained Laban from hurting Jacob, as Laban himself owned; and hindered Balsam from cursing Israel, which he would gladly have done. And so God could prevent the innumerable sins of men, which yet he does not. We, as creatures, are bound to hinder all the evil we can; but God is under no such obligation.

(3). God permits sin to be done, or suffers it to be, in his providence. This is the language of scripture; "Who in time past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways"; and these ways were sinful ones (Acts 14:16). And

this permission is not a connivance at sin; nor a concession or grant of it; much less does it express any approbation of it; nor is it barely a leaving of men to the liberty of their wills, to do as they please; as Moses suffered the Jews to put away their wives when they pleased; as though he was careless and indifferent about it: nor is it a mere naked permission, but a voluntary one, yea, an efficacious one; God's will is in it, and efficacy attends it. Hence,

(4). God is represented as active in things relative to it; he not only suffers men to walk in their sinful ways, but "he gives them up to their own hearts lusts; he gives them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; he sends them strong delusion, that they may believe a lie" (Ps. 81:12; Rom. 1:28 2; Thess. 2:11). Joseph's brethren sold him into Egypt, but God sent him thither; he bid Shimei curse David; he gave the evil spirit a commission to go forth and do what he proposed, to be a lying spirit in the mouths of Ahab's prophets (Gen. 45:5 2; Sam. 16:10; 1 Kings 22:21,22).

(5). It will be proper to distinguish between an act, and the obliquity of it; every action, as an action, a natural one, is of God, the first Mover, in whom all move; the creature is dependent on God, as the Creator, in every action, as well as in his being; but the obliquity and irregularity of the action, as it swerves from the rule of God's law, is from man this is sometimes illustrated by divines, in such an instance as this; a man that rides on a lame horse, he by whipping and spurring is the cause and occasion of his motion of going forward; but he is not the cause of his going lamely; that arises from a disorder in the creature itself: also the sun in the firmament, when it exhales a nauseous scent from a dunghill, it is the cause of the exhalation; but it is not the cause of the ill scent of it, that arises from the dunghill; the heat and force of the sun may be the occasion of the ill scent being drawn forth, but not of that itself. So,

(6). God in his providence may put in the way of persons things that are good in themselves; which may give an opportunity, and be the occasion of drawing out the corruptions of men's hearts; thus God in his providence directed Joseph to dream, and to tell his dreams; which drew upon him the envy of his brethren; and God put it into the heart of Jacob to send him to visit them in the fields, where they were feeding their flocks, which gave them an opportunity to form and execute evil against him. David was brought by providence into afflicted circumstances, which obliged him to flee, and pass by the way where Shimei lived; and which gave him an opportunity of doing that with his mouth, which very probably he had done in his heart before; and now it was, as it were, saying, Go curse David; the object was presented, and a fit opportunity in providence offered. There is sometimes a concurrence of things in providence, which in themselves are not sinful,

yet are the occasion of sin; as in the affair of David and Bathsheba. Various things met together, which gave an opportunity, and were the occasion of committing sin, which David fell into, not being restrained by the grace of God; and to be preserved from opportunities, the occasion of sinning, is owing to the kind providence of God. Of this an heathen was sensible, and therefore gave thanks to God, that when he had a disposition to sin, and should have committed it, had an occasion offered; yet שׂטָן by the good providence of God, no such occasion, from the concourse of things, did offer for his commission of it. God gives to some men wealth and riches, and these are the occasions of much sin to them. He gives a law, which forbids men to sin; but as the poet says, "Nitimur in vetitum"; or rather as the apostle says, "Sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence" (Rom. 7:8), the gospel also sent to men, is the occasion of stirring up the corruption of their nature, their pride, and passion, to an opposition to it, and it becomes the saviour of death unto death unto them (2 Cor. 2:16).

(7). The concern of providence about sinful actions, further appears in limiting and setting bounds; as to the waves of the sea, saying, "hitherto shalt thou come, and no further" (Job 38:11). Thus Joseph's brethren would have run greater lengths in sin, had they not been restrained by the overruling providence of God; their first scheme was to put him to death; this was disconcerted by Reuben, who proposed putting him into a pit, and let him starve there; from this also they were diverted by a motion of Judah's to take him from thence, and sell him to the Ishmaelites, who were coming that way. And though it is amazing to observe how much sin is committed in the world; yet considering the wretched depravity of human nature, the temptations of Satan, and the snares of the world, it is most amazing that no more is committed; which can only be ascribed to the restraining providence of God.

(8). God in the affairs of providence, is to be considered as the Rector and Governor of the world, and the Judge of the whole earth; and in this branch of it, respecting sin, which he overrules either for the punishment of those who commit it, or of others, or else for good; he sometimes punishes one sin with another. Plato says, a license to sin, is the greatest punishment of sin. So disobedient Israel, because they would not hearken to the voice of God, and would have nothing to do with him, therefore he gave them up to their own hearts lust: and the heathens, because they liked not to retain God in their knowledge, therefore he gave them up to a reprobate mind, to commit things sinful; and because the followers of antichrist believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness; therefore he sent them

strong delusions to believe a lie; and when he is said to harden the hearts, and blind the minds of men, it is done in a judicial way, by giving them up to greater hardness and blindness, for their willful obstinacy, and affected ignorance (Ps. 81:11; Rom. 1:28; 2 Thess. 2:11,12; Rom. 9:18; 11:8,10). Thus God corrected David's sin with Bathsheba, by the incest of his son with his wives and concubines; and punished the hypocrisy and idolatry of Israel, through the pride, ambition, and cruelty of the Assyrian monarch, who was in his hand the rod of his anger, and the staff of his indignation (2 Sam. 12:11; Isa. 10:6,7). Sometimes God overrules the sins of men for good; as the sin of Adam, for the glorifying of his perfections; the crucifixion of Christ for the salvation of men, and Joseph's being sold into Egypt, for the saving many persons alive (Gen. 50:20).

To conclude this article of providence; let it be observed,

1. That all the providences of God are executed in the wisest manner; though they may not sometimes appear clear to us, and are inscrutable by us, and the causes and reasons of them not to be accounted for; yet even in such a view of them it should be said with the apostle, "O the depth of the riches", &c. (Rom. 11:33).

2. They are all done in the most holy and righteous manner; even such as are concerned about sin, are clear from any imputation of it; "The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works" (Ps. 145:17.

3. They are executed with power irresistible; they are immutably performed, according to the unchangeable will of God, who works all things in providence after the counsel of his will; he does what he pleases; his counsel always stands; and he does all his pleasure. Wherefore,

4. We should give to him the glory of all; observe with wonder and gratitude, the various steps of it respecting ourselves and others; and put our trust in him for things temporal and spiritual; and at all times cast our care upon him, who cares for us; seeing it is, and always will be, well with the righteous, in time and to all eternity.

Chapter 5

OF THE CONFIRMATION OF THE ELECT ANGELS, AND THE FALL OF THE NON-ELECT.

Having considered at large the doctrines of creation and providence; I proceed to observe the first and principal events of providence relating to angels and men; and shall begin with the angels, the first of rational creatures that were created, and in whom the providence of God first took place; and whereas there was a distinction made between them, of elect and non-elect, as has been shown in a preceding chapter. I shall take notice,

1. Of the confirmation of the elect angels; for as God chose them to a state of holiness and happiness; as soon as he created them, he confirmed them in that state; the providence of God was not only concerned in the preservation and sustentation of them in their being when created (Col. 1:16,17), but in the government of them, which are the two parts and branches of providence. Now the government of rational creatures is in a moral way, by giving a law to them, as the rule of their obedience; and such a law was given to angels, not of a positive nature, similar to what was given to Adam, forbidding him on pain of death, to eat of the fruit of a certain tree, as a trial of his obedience to the whole will of God; since we read of no such law, or like it, given to angels; nor a law in the form of a covenant, as to men, since the angels do not appear to have had any federal head, they standing singly and alone, and each for themselves; nor do we ever read of good angels keeping covenant; nor of the evil angels being charged with the breach of covenant; but it was a law implanted in their nature, concreated with them in like manner, as the law of nature was inscribed on Adam's heart, some remains of which are to be observed in his fallen posterity, and even among the Gentiles (Rom. 2:14,15), which is the same in substance with the moral law written; and with which angels are concerned, so far as the precepts of it are suitable to spiritual substances; for such of them, and so much of them, as relate to the body, and to corporeal actions, cannot agree with angels, who are incorporeal; as the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth commands: but such as relate to the fear and worship of God in a spiritual manner; to love to God, and love to fellow creatures; these are binding on angels, and are perfectly obeyed by the good angels; and in this their perfect obedience and holiness, are they immutably confirmed, from the moment of their creation; for this their confirmation is not owing to any merits of theirs, through the good use of the freedom of their wills: some have fancied that they were first in a state of probation, and having stood some time in their obedience, through the power of their free will, merited confirmation in that state from God, but a creature, even of the highest rank, can merit nothing at the hand of God; for "Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again?" (Rom. 11:35. The obedience of angels was due to God, and could merit nothing of him; nor was their confirmation owing to the merits of Christ. Christ is a Mediator between God and men; but not between God and angels; for though he may be allowed to be a medium of conservation of angels; yet not a Mediator of peace and reconciliation, which they needed not; he is not a Saviour and Redeemer of them; he merited nothing for them by his incarnation, sufferings, and death; these were not on their account; hence the angels say, "Unto you is born this day (not unto us)

a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11; Heb. 2:14,16,17). But their confirmation is owing to the free favour and good will of God, choosing them to a state of holiness and happiness; and to his putting them under the care and charge of Christ, as the Head of all principality and power (1 Tim. 5:21; Col. 2:10).

Now in this state of constant obedience and perfect holiness, they are immutably fixed by the will of God, and have from their creation continued in it, and ever will; as appears by their enjoyment of the presence of God perpetually; they always behold the face of God in heaven; they never left their habitation, but have always resided in heaven, where they were first placed; hence called the "angels of heaven" (Matthew 18:10; 24:36), and by their constant and perfect obedience to the will of God, and which is made the pattern of obedience to it in men; or we are directed to pray that it might be like it; "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven"; that is, by the angels there (Matthew 6:10), and by the consummate happiness of the saints at the resurrection being like to theirs; which supposes them to have continued in their original state, and that the saints will be like unto them, not only in the immortality of their bodies, but in perfect holiness and impeccability, as perfectly holy as they, and no more subject to sin than they are (Luke 20:36), and by what is said of them with relation to the second coming of Christ, and their estate to all eternity; as that he shall descend from heaven with his mighty angels; shall come, not only in his own, and in his Father's glory, but in the glory of the holy angels; that he will employ them in gathering in the elect from the four parts of the world; that he will then confess the names of his faithful followers before them; and that the wicked will be tormented with fire and brimstone in their presence; the smoke of whose torment shall ascend for ever and ever; and consequently the holy angels will be free from that torment, and be happy for ever and ever; (see 2 Thess. 1:7; Luke 9:26; Matthew 24:31; Rev. 3:5; 14:10, 11).

II. The next remarkable event respecting angels, is the sin and fall of the non-elect angels. The heathens seem to have had some notion of the fall of the evil angels; for Plutarch speaks of demons or devils, as expelled by the gods, and fallen from heaven. The providence of God was equally concerned in the sustentation and conservation of them in their beings, as of the elect angels; and in which they are and will be everlastingly preserved. The same law also for the government of them, and as a rule of obedience, was given to them; or otherwise they could not be chargeable with sin, as they are; they are called the angels that sinned. Now sin is a transgression of the law; where there is no law there is no transgression (2 Pet. 2:4; 1 John 3:4; Rom. 4:15). These angels, in their original estate of creation, were in a capacity

of obeying the law that was given them; their will was inclined to it; and the bias of their mind was towards it; for they were created holy, just, and good; the estate they are now in, is not that in which they were made; it is expressly said of them, that they "kept not their first estate", and "abode not in the truth" (Jude 1:6; John 8:44), which supposes a better estate than what they are now in, and that they were originally in an estate of truth; that is, of integrity, righteousness, and holiness, though they did not abide in it, but fell from it; for being left to the freedom of their will, which was mutable, and is that folly and weakness which angels in their original state were chargeable with by God, and in comparison of him; they sinned and fell, to which fall of theirs our Lord has respect, when he says, "I beheld Satan, as lightning fall from heaven" (Luke 10:18), that is, suddenly, swiftly, and irresistibly, and which proves the existence of Christ before his incarnation; as that not only he was before Abraham, but before Adam; however, before the fall of Adam, for he was before the fall of the angels, he was present at it, and a witness of it. Now concerning this, the following things may be inquired into.

First, What was the sin of the angels, by which they fell? This cannot be said with precision, the scriptures being silent about it; yet it is generally supposed, and it is probable from the scriptures, that their sin was,

I. Pride; and which seems probable from (1 Tim. 3:6). Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil; being guilty of the same sin, he is in danger of the same condemnation; and usually so it is, as the wise man observes, that "pride goes before destruction; and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18). And so it might before the fall of the angels, and be the cause of it. They might first begin with contemplating their own perfections and excellencies, which were very great; as their wisdom, knowledge, strength, &c. Which might lead on to self-admiration, and issue in an over-weaning opinion of themselves, so as to think more highly of themselves than they ought to have done; and to conclude, that creatures of such an high rank and class, as they were, ought not to be subject to a law, and therefore cast off the yoke of the law, and departed from their allegiance and obedience to God; hence one of the names of Satan is Belial, "without a yoke"; and the children of the devil are called sons of Belial; not being subject to the law of God (2 Cor. 6:15; 2 Sam. 23:6), upon which they seem to have affected deity; and having revolted from God, set up for gods themselves; and this may be thought to be confirmed from the manner in which they tempted our first parents to rebel against God; to do which they might hope to prevail with them, as it was the snare in which they themselves were taken; "Ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5), as also by all the methods they have since taken to get themselves worshipped as

gods. Satan has usurped to himself the title of the god of this world; and very early did he introduce into the world the worship of idols, and the offering of sacrifice to them; which to do is no other than to sacrifice to devils (2 Cor. 4:4; 1 Cor. 10:20), yea, he has prevailed upon the poor Indians, both Eastern and Western, to worship him openly as a devil; and nothing can be a greater instance of his pride, arrogance, and impudence, than the proposal he made to Christ, to give him all the kingdoms of this world, if he would but fall down and worship him (Matthew 4:9).

2. Some have thought that envy was the sin of the devils, by which they fell; led thereunto by a saying in the Apocryphal book of Wisdom, "Nevertheless through envy of the devil came death into the world: and they that do hold of his side do find it." (Wisdom 2:24) and, indeed, envy and pride are inseparable; a proud man is always envious at others; he cannot bear that any should be above him, or even equal to him: the apostle joins these sins together (Jam. 4:5,6), the angels might envy the superior power and excellencies of God himself, and therefore withdrew from him, as not bearing his superiority over them, envying that he should be above them, and higher than they; if there was any superior rank and class of angels above these, since some are called dominions, thrones, principalities, and powers, they might be the object of their envy, and be displeased that they were not of the same, or of a superior class; however, it seems highly probable, that they envied the state and happiness man, and therefore contrived his fall and ruin; as that he should be made after the image and likeness of God, which is never said of them, however like to God angels may be; and that man should be the lord of the whole world, and all the creatures put in subjection to him; which they might think more properly belonged to them. And especially they might be envious at the Son of God, who they might understand, would in time assume human nature; though the end and design of it they might not know; and that in that nature he should sit at the right hand of God, which they were not admitted to; and that he should in that nature be the Head of all principality and power; and that angels, authorities, and powers, should be subject to him in it. Now this they could not brook and bear, that the human nature should be advanced above that of theirs; and therefore broke away from God in envy, wrath, and malice; and hence there has been from the beginning, a continued enmity and opposition by the devil, to Christ, the seed of the woman, that should bruise the head of the serpent; hence Satan always sought to oppose Christ in his person and offices, and to lead men into errors and mistakes about them; denying him in one or other of his natures, and depreciating him in his offices; and hence he set up antichrist, whose coming was after the working of Satan; and whose

doctrines are doctrines of devils, and diametrically opposite to the glory of Christ.

3. Unbelief may also be taken into the account of the sin of the angels; they must disbelieve the eternal power of God, and his truth and faithfulness to his word, or they would not have dared to have sinned against him; and as the apostasy of our first parents began with that, and disregard unto, and a disbelief of the threatening word of God; it may be reasonably thought, that something of the same kind led on to the rebellion and fall of the angels; indeed, their sin seems to be a complication of iniquity, of pride, envy, and unbelief.

Secondly, There are several questions commonly asked, relative to the fall of angels; to which a short answer may be returned; as,

I. How and by what means they came to fall? They had no tempter; there were no creatures in being capable of tempting them to sin; not irrational creatures, who could have no influence on them; and if man was then created, as it is a question whether he was or not; and if he was, he had no disposition to anything of this kind; but, on the other hand, his fall was through the temptation of an evil angel; there was none but God to tempt them, and he tempts none, neither angel nor man (Jam. 1:13,14), and this indeed was the case, as before observed; the angels were left to their own free will, which was mutable, and so of themselves, and not through any temptation without them, sinned and fell; this is always spoken of as their own voluntary act and deed, without any force or persuasion used with them; they kept not their first estate, left their habitation, and abode not in the truth. It is very probable, that one of them, famous above the rest for his wisdom and strength, might begin the apostasy; and being in high esteem for his excellent qualifications, he gave the lead, and others followed his example; hence we read of the prince of devils, and of the prince of the power of the air, or of the posse of devils in it, and of the devil and his angels (Matthew 12:24; 25:41; Eph 2:2).

2. It is sometimes asked, When the angels fell? To which it may be answered, Not before the sixth day of the creation: as it is probable they might be created on the first day, when the heavens, their habitation, was made, and light was formed; so they continued in their first estate, during the six days of the creation; for on the sixth day, when all the creatures were made, "God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good"; not only when made, but to this time had continued so. Now if the angels had sinned before, this could not have been said; and yet they must have fallen before Adam fell, because it was the serpent, or the devil in the serpent, either in a real one, or in the form of one, that beguiled Eve, and so was the

cause and means of the fall of man. But however, certain it is, that the fall of the angels was very early; since the devil is called, "a murderer from the beginning" (John 8:44), a destroyer of mankind, either from the beginning of the world, that is, quickly after it was made; or from the beginning of his creation, not long after he began to be; or from the beginning of man's creation, who abode not long in his happy state, but soon fell from it, through the temptation of the devil.

3. This question is sometimes put, What number of the angels fell? This cannot be said with any precision; some have thought that as many fell as stood; grounding it on a passage in (Ezek. 41:18), where it is said, that on the wall of the temple were carved, with cherubim and palm trees, a palm tree between a cherub and a cherub; by cherubim they understand angels, and by palm trees good men, said to flourish like the palm tree; and who are supposed to fill up the places of fallen angels; and so conclude the same number fell as stood; but as such a sense of the text cannot easily be established, it is insufficient to build such a notion upon. Others have thought, that not so many fell as stood; since evil angels are never said to be innumerable, as the good angels are (Heb. 12:22). And which they also gather from the words of Elisha to his servant; "Fear not; for they that be with us, are more than they that be with them"; and the servant's eyes were presently opened, and he saw the "mountain full of horses and chariots of fire round about"; that is, angels in such forms (2 Kings 6:16,17), but then the comparison is not between good and bad angels; but between the good angels and the Syrian host. Others fancy that a third part of the angels fell; this they take from (Rev. 12:4), where the dragon is said to draw with his tail the third part of the stars of heaven; but by the stars are not meant angels, but such who bore the character of the ministers of the word, who in that book are called stars (Rev. 1:20), whom Satan, through his influence, prevailed upon to drop their character, and desert their office. However, it is certain, that not a few of the angels, but many of them, fell; even as many as to form a kingdom, with a prince at the head of it; and there were so many that possessed one man, as to be called a legion, which consisted of some hundreds; for when the devil in him was asked his name, he answered, "My name is legion, for we are many"; yea, it seems there are various kinds and sorts of them; for when the disciples asked Christ the reason why they could not cast out a certain devil, our Lord, among other things, says, "this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" (Matthew 12:24,26; 17:19- 21; Mark 5:9).

Thirdly, The state and condition into which the angels were brought by sin, may next be considered. They were originally angels of light; full of light, knowledge, and understanding; but by sinning are become angels

of darkness; and are called the power of darkness, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, blind, and blinding others (Col. 1:13; Eph. 6:12; 2 Cor. 4:4), for whatever light and knowledge of natural things they retain, and which may be increased by long observation and experience; or whatever notional knowledge they have of evangelic truth, they have no spiritual and experimental knowledge; not the light of faith; nor rejoicing of hope; nor heat of love; no light of spiritual joy and gladness; but all black despair. They were once pure and holy creatures; but through their sin and fall, became impure and unholy; and therefore called "unclean spirits"; who delight in the impurities of sin; and take pleasure in drawing men into them, to the commission of them; the devil is called emphatically and eminently, "the wicked one", being notoriously and superlatively wicked; even wickedness itself (Matthew 10:1; 13:38; 1 John 3:12; 5:18). Once they were lovers of God, and of their fellow creatures; but now at enmity to God, and all that is good; and spiteful and malicious to mankind. Satan is called emphatically the enemy, the enemy of God and of Christ, and of all good men; desirous of doing all the harm and mischief to them he can, or gets leave to do; the case of Job abundantly proves this; whose substance, family, and health, by permission, he destroyed; and would have taken away his life, could he have obtained leave: and as also the possessions of men by him, in the times of Christ show; to the torment of their bodies, and the distraction of their minds; and, indeed, he is always going about seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. 5:8). These fallen angels, who were once in a guiltless state, are now in the most desperate circumstances; are in chains of darkness and black despair, under irremissible guilt; no pardon for them, nor hope of it for evermore; which leads on to observe,

Fourthly, Their punishment; and which is both of loss and sense; they have lost the favour and presence of God, and they sensibly feel his wrath and indignation on them. Sinning, they were hurled out of heaven, and deprived of their blissful state they left; being forced to leave their habitation there; nor will their place be any more found there; the apostle Peter says, they were "cast down to hell" (2 Pet. 2:4), but where that is, it is not easy to say; very probably upon their ejection out of heaven, they fell down into the air, since Satan is said to be the "prince of the power of the air" (Eph 2:2). Not that he has a power of moving the air, and of raising storms and tempests; but he is the ruler of the posse of devils that dwell in the air; from whence, by divine permission, they descend and patrol; and rove about the earth, in chains, limited and restrained for the punishment of wicked men, and for the trial of the graces of good men; but as yet they do not seem to have their full punishment inflicted on them; or are not yet in full torment; as

may be learnt from their words to Christ; "Art thou come hither to torment us before our time?" And are said to be "reserved unto judgment, and unto the judgment of the great day"; when their full sentence will be pronounced upon them, and be carried into execution (Matthew 8:29; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 1:6), which they "believe and tremble" at (Jam. 2:19), and which punishment will be everlasting; there will be no end of it, no deliverance from it; it is called everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; the fire of divine wrath, which will never be quenched, but always burn without intermission, to all eternity; and a "lake of fire and brimstone", where the devil, with the beast and false prophet, will be "tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Matthew 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

Chapter 6

OF THE HONOUR AND HAPPINESS OF MAN IN A STATE OF INNOCENCE.

Having considered the first and principal events of providence respecting angels, I shall proceed to consider such as respect man, as soon as created, and when in his first estate, and the honour and happiness of that estate; not what regard his internal honour and excellency, being created in the image and likeness of God, which lay in his wisdom and knowledge; in his holiness and righteousness; in the right use of his rational powers, his understanding, will, and affections; in communion with God, and in his frequent appearances to him, which have been treated of; but what regard his external honour and happiness; as,

First, His being placed in the garden of Eden; for an habitation to dwell in; for the support of his animal life; and for his exercise in the culture and dressing of it,

Firstly, For his habitation; "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden"; and there he put the man whom "he had formed" (Gen. 2:8). Indeed, the whole earth was made to be inhabited by man, as it has been ever since the creation of it; "the heaven", even "the heavens are the Lords"; he has reserved that part of his creation for himself, for the habitation of his holiness; and for his attendants, the holy angels; "But the earth hath he given to the children of men", for them to dwell in; (see Isa 45:18; Ps. 115:16). And though Adam was heir and lord of the whole world, yet there was one particular spot more excellent than all the rest, assigned him for his residence; even as a king of a large country has his royal seat, palace, and court, in some particular part of it: and it appears that this garden of Eden was not the whole world, as some have thought, which, for its delightfulness and fertility, might be called a garden; but though it was exceeding delightful and fruitful, in comparison

of what it is now; yet it is certain, that the garden of Eden was a distinct spot from the rest of the world; this is clear from the man being said to be put into it when created, which shows that he was formed without it, and when made, was removed into it; as also from his being driven out of it when he had sinned. To which may be added, that we read of a land that was at the East of it; (see Gen. 2:8; 3:24; 4:16). It is called the garden of God, because of his planting; and of Eden, because of the pleasantness and delightfulness of it, as the word signifies; hence any spot that was uncommonly fruitful and delightful, is compared unto it (Gen. 13:10). Where this garden was, cannot be said with any certainty; whether in Armenia, Assyria, or in Judea; most probably it was in Mesopotamia, since we read of an Eden along with some places in that country (Isa. 37:12). However, it is not to be known at this day; and there are many things that contribute to the obscurity of it; as its being left without any to cultivate it, upon Adam's being ejected from it, and so, in course of time, must become ruinous and desolate; and from the curse taking place upon it, as no doubt it did, and upon it chiefly and in the first place, as being man's peculiar habitation; "Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth": besides, fire might spring up out of the earth, and destroy the trees and ornaments of it; or they might be washed away afterwards by the waters of the flood; and what through the change it might then undergo, as the whole earth did; and through the alteration of the course of the rivers of it, it is no wonder it should not be known at this day where it was. However, it was so delightful a spot, at its first plantation, that the church of Christ is compared unto it, and is called, in allusion to it, "a garden enclosed" ✠ and her plants, "an orchard", or "paradise of pomegranates" (Song of Sol. 4:12,13). Moreover, it was an emblem of the heavenly state, which is therefore called paradise (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 12:3, 4; Rev. 2:7).

Secondly, Adam was put into the garden of Eden for the support of his animal life; where grew trees, not only pleasant to the sight, but good for food; and Adam was allowed to eat of them all excepting one (Gen. 2:9,16,17), there are two trees particularly taken notice of; "the tree of life, in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil": the former is so called, because with the other trees of the garden, it was a means of maintaining Adam's animal life, and perhaps the chief means of it; and so of the continuance of his life, so long as he stood in his integrity; for notwithstanding his body was gifted with immortality, this it had not from the constitution of it, but from the gift of God; and was to be continued in the use of means, and by eating of the fruit of this tree in particular; though what it was, and its fruit, are not now to be known by us: not that it had such a virtue in it as to prevent diseases; to which Adam's body was not, as

yet, subject; nor such as to give and preserve immortality, and continue it, as Adam vainly thought it would, after he had sinned; which seems to be supposed in Genesis 3:22 spoken according to his sense of things; but this tree was planted and pointed at, and called by this name, because it was a token that Adam had his natural life from God, the God of his life; and that it depended upon him, and that he might expect the continuance of it so long as he kept his state of integrity: it was also an emblem of Christ, who is therefore called the tree of life (Prov. 3:18; Rev. 2:7; 22:2). But not then to Adam, unless of him as his Creator, from whom, as such, he had his life and being; but not of him as Mediator, who, as such, is the author and giver of life, spiritual and eternal; but of him, as such, Adam had no knowledge; and so could not be a symbol of spiritual and eternal life to him, its that his then present state, though it might be after his fall. There was another tree, called "the tree of knowledge of good and evil": what that tree was, cannot be said; it is generally thought to be the apple tree; founded upon a passage in (Song of Sol. 8:5). Others have thought of the fig tree, because that Adam and Eve immediately plucked the leaves of that tree, to cover their naked bodies with; but after they had suffered so much by eating the fruit of it, it can hardly be supposed, if this was the tree, that they would have so much as touched its leaves, and much less have wrapped their bodies with them; and there is no sufficient foundation for either of them; nor for any other suggested; as the vine tree, stalks of wheat, &c. And though this tree might be as good for food as any other of the trees, yet it was forbid to be used for that purpose, as a trial of man's obedience. It had its name, not from any virtue that it had of ripening the rational powers of man, and of increasing and improving his knowledge, as say the Jews and Socinians, who take Adam to be but a great baby, an infant in knowledge; whereas his knowledge of God, and of things natural and moral, was very great: and besides, had he wanted knowledge, this tree could not be the means of accelerating and increasing it, since he was forbid to eat of it; nor was it so called from the lie of the serpent; "God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil". But this tree had its name before that lie was told, or any temptation was offered to Eve (Gen. 2:9,17; 3:5). But it was so called, either because God hereby tried and made known, whether Adam would obey his will or not; or eventually, since hereby Adam knew by sad experience, what the good was he had lost, and might have enjoyed; and what a bitter and evil thing sin was, and what evil it had brought on him and his posterity; otherwise Adam full well knew before, in the theory, the difference between good and evil; but by his fall, or eating of the fruit of this tree, he knew these things practically; to his great grief and distress.

Secondly, Adam was put into the garden of "Eden to dress it and to keep it" (Gen. 2:15), for the culture of it; not to worship and serve God in it, as some give the sense of the word: indeed as Adam had a right knowledge of God, and knew it was his duty to worship, serve, and glorify God, he took every opportunity of doing it in the garden; and the various trees and plants, and beauties of it, must needs lead him into adoring views of the great Creator; and he might often take his walks in the garden to contemplate the perfections of God displayed in it; even as Isaac went into the field to meditate on divine things. But the sense of the passage is, that he was put into the garden to cultivate it and keep it in good order, and keep out of it everything that might be injurious to it; and this was a proper exercise for man in his state of innocence; for it was never the will of God that men should in any state live an idle and lazy life; nor indeed any of his creatures, the most exalted; the angels are "ministering spirits", employed in the service of God, and in ministrations to their fellow creatures. Yet the work of man in the garden was without toil and fatigue, he did not eat his bread with the sweat of his brow, as after the fall; but his service in it was attended with the utmost delight and pleasure; nor was it at all dishonorable to him, nor inconsistent with the high, honorable, and happy estate in which he was.

Fourthly, What added to the delight and fruitfulness of the garden of Eden, was a river that went out of it to water it; which was parted into four heads or branches, the names of which were Pison, Gibon, and Hiddekel or Tigris, and Euphrates; which may be symbols of the gospel and its doctrines, which, like a fountain or river, went forth out of Zion the church, and makes it cheerful and fruitful; and of the ordinances of it, those still waters of the sanctuary; or of the Spirit and his grace, which are rivers of living waters which flow from them that believe; or rather of the everlasting love of God, that pure river of water of life, a river of Eden, or of pleasure; the four heads and branches of which are election, redemption, effectual calling, and eternal life (Rom. 8:30).

2. Secondly, Another remarkable event in providence, relating to the honour of man in his estate of innocence, is the bringing of all the creatures to him to give names unto them, and whatsoever names he gave them they were called by (Gen. 2:19), which was a proof and instance of his great wisdom and knowledge, part of the image of God he was created in; for to give names to creatures suitable to their nature, required a large share of knowledge of them; insomuch that Plato said, that it seemed to him that that nature was more than human that gave names to things; and besides, by the creatures being brought unto him for such a purpose, whether by the ministry of angels, or by an instinct in them, it was putting him into

the possession of them, as being their lord and proprietor; whose dominion over them was declared when created, and now confirmed by this act.

Thirdly, Another providential event, and which shows the care of God over Adam, and his concern for him, is providing an help meet for him, and a partner with him in civil and religious things, man being a sociable creature; and whereas no suitable one could be found among the creatures, he cast man into a deep sleep, and took out a rib from him, and of that made a woman, brought her to him and joined them together in marriage, by whom he could propagate his species and live a social life; which shows that marriage is honourable, being instituted in paradise, and not at all inconsistent with the pure state of man in innocence; and it was also typical of the marriage of Christ, the second Adam, and his church; and of their mutual union and communion; (see Eph. 5:31,32).

Chapter 7

OF THE LAW GIVEN TO ADAM, AND THE COVENANT MADE WITH HIM IN HIS STATE OF INNOCENCE; IN WHICH HE WAS THE FEDERAL HEAD AND REPRESENTATIVE OF HIS POSTERITY.

The manner in which God governs rational creatures is by a law, as the rule of their obedience to him, and which is what we call God's moral government of the world; and as he gave a law to angels, which some of them kept, and have been confirmed in a state of obedience to it; and others broke it, and plunged themselves into destruction and misery: so God gave a law to Adam, and which was in the form of a covenant, and in which Adam stood as a covenant head to all his posterity. And I shall endeavour to show what that law was, that it was in the form of a covenant, and that Adam was a federal head in it.

1. First, The law given him was both of a natural and positive kind. God, who is the Creator of all, Judge of all the earth, and King of the whole world, has a right to give what laws he pleases to his creatures, and they are bound as creatures, and by the ties of gratitude, to observe them. The natural law, or law of nature, given to Adam, was concreated with him, written on his heart, and engraved and imprinted in his nature from the beginning of his existence; by which he was acquainted with the will of his Maker, and directed to observe it; which appears from the remains of it in the hearts of all men, and even of the Gentiles; and from that natural conscience in every man, which, if not by some means lulled asleep, that it does not perform its office, excuses men from blame when they do well, and accuses them, and charges them with guilt when they do ill (Rom. 2:14,15), and likewise from

the inscription of this law, in a spiritual and evangelic manner, on regenerate persons, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace; "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts" (Jer. 31:33), so that they become the epistle of Christ, having the law as from him, and by his Spirit written in them, and the Spirit put into them, to enable them to walk in his statutes, and keep his judgments, and do them; and this law that was written on Adam's heart, and is re-inscribed in regeneration, is the same with the Decalogue, as to the substance of it; and, excepting such things in it as were peculiar to the Jews, all of a moral nature; and which is comprised in these two precepts, to which it is reduced by Christ; "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thou heart; and thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself"; this was binding on Adam, and on all his posterity.

Besides, This natural law, or law of nature, given to Adam, there were others of a positive kind, which were positive institutions of God, such as man could never have known by the light of nature; but were made known by the revelation of God; such as relate to divine worship, and the manner of it; that there was a God, and that he was to be worshipped, Adam knew by the light of nature; but how, or in what manner, and with what rites and formalities he would be worshipped, this he could not know, but by divine revelation. In all dispensations there have been ordinances of divine service; there now are; and there were under the former dispensation; and so in a state of integrity; which were appointed of God, and revealed to man; for the law that forbid the eating of the fruit of a certain tree, is not the only positive law of God; however, it is certain that was one; "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat" (Gen. 2:17), which was given as a trial of man's obedience to the will of God, whether he would observe it or not; for the evil of the act of eating did not arise from the nature of the tree, and its fruit, which was as good for food as perhaps any tree in the garden; but from its being disobedience to the will of God. And be it what it may, in which God is disobeyed, it matters not; and by so much the lesser that is which is forbidden, by so much the greater is the sin of disobedience, the more aggravated, and the more inexcusable.

2. Secondly, This law given to Adam, taken in its complex view, as both natural and positive, was in the form of a covenant; the same to be both a law and a covenant, is not at all inconsistent; so the law given to the people of Israel from mount Sinai, is also called a covenant (Ex. 24:7; Deut. 5:1-3), yea, the covenant of grace is called a law, the law of Christ's mediatorship, which was in his heart to fulfil; even the covenant he made with his Father, and his Father with him (Ps. 40:8). The law given to Adam, as it was a law, sprung from the sovereignty of God, who had a right to impose a law upon him,

whatsoever he thought fit; as it was a covenant, it was an act of condescension and goodness in God, to enter into it with man, his creature; he could have required obedience to his law, without promising anything on account of it; for it is what God has a prior right unto, and therefore a recompence for it cannot be claimed; if, therefore, God thinks fit, for the encouragement of obedience, to promise in covenant any good, it is all condescension, it is all kindness.

Moreover, It may be observed, that the law given to Adam is expressly called a covenant, as it should seem in Hosea 6:7 "but they, like men", (or like Adam) "have transgressed the covenant": the sense of which seems to be, that as Adam transgressed the covenant God made with him; so the Israelites had transgressed the covenant God made with them; for as well may Adam's transgression of the law or covenant be referred to here, as his palliating his sin, after the commission of it, is referred to in Job 31:33. Besides, the terms by which the positive law given to Adam is expressed, manifestly imply a covenant; as that if he eat of the forbidden fruit, he should surely die; which implies, that if he abstained from it, he should surely live; which formally constitute a covenant; even a promise and a threatening. To which may be added, the distinction of two covenants of grace and works, called the law of faith, and the law of works; and a twofold righteousness and obedience yielded to the one, and to the other, the righteousness which is of faith, and the righteousness which is of the law (Gal. 4:24; Rom. 3:27; 10:5,6), for without the law of Adam, as a covenant, two covenants cannot be fairly made out; for though in Hebrews 8:7,13 we read of a first and second, an old and a new covenant; yet these respect one and the same covenant, under different dispensations; and though in the passage referred to, the covenant at Sinai may be intended as one, yet as a repetition, and a new edition of the covenant made with Adam.

This covenant is by divines called by various names; sometimes a covenant of "friendship", man being in friendship with God when it was made with him; of which there are many instances; as the placing him in the garden of Eden, putting all the creatures in subjection to him, and providing an help meet for him; appearing often to him, and talking friendly with him, and granting him communion with him; and it was an act of friendship to him to enter into covenant with him; and while Adam observed this he remained in friendship with God; and it was the breach of this covenant that separated chief friends. Sometimes they call it a covenant of "nature", it being made with Adam as a natural man, and a natural head of his posterity; and promised natural blessings to him and his; was coeval with his nature; and was made with all human nature, or with all mankind, in Adam, it is also

called a covenant of "innocence"; because made with man in his innocent state; and who, as long as he kept this covenant, continued innocent; but when he brake it, he was no more so. And it is frequently called the "legal" covenant, the covenant of "works", as the Scripture calls it, "the law of works", as before observed; it promised life on the performance of good works; its language was, "Do this and live". And it sometimes has the name of the covenant of life from the promise of life in it; though not in such sense as the covenant with Levi, as a type of Christ, is called, the covenant of life; for it is life of a lower kind that was promised to Adam, than what was promised to Christ, for his people, as will be seen hereafter.

Thirdly, As in all covenants there are contracting parties, so in this.

1. God is one of the parties in this covenant; nor was it unworthy of God to enter into a covenant with Adam; for if it was not unworthy of God to make a covenant of conservation with Noah; a covenant of circumcision with Abraham; and a covenant of royalty with David; a covenant respecting the kingdom, and the continuance of it in his family; men in a fallen state; then it could not be unworthy of God to make one with Adam in his perfect state; yea, even since, on the behalf of his people, he makes a covenant with the beasts of the field, the fowls of heaven, and the creeping things of the ground, Hos 2:18. Besides, to make a covenant with Adam, was a display of his goodness to him. As he was the work of his hands, he must have a regard to him; as every artificer has for his work; and would not despise him, but be concerned for his good; and therefore in covenant promised good things to him, in case of obedience to his will: this his covenant also flowed from his sovereignty; since all his good things are his own, and he can do with them as he pleases; make promises of them in a covenant way; in like manner he disposed of some of them in such a way to Adam.

2. The other contracting party was Adam; who gave a full and hearty assent to what was proposed to him. The stipulation on the part of God, was proposing and promising good, on condition of obedience. The stipulation, or restipulation on the part of man, was his free and full consent to yield the obedience proposed, in expectation of the promise fulfilled; and this may be concluded from the law he was to obey being written on his heart; which he had full knowledge of, approved of, and assented to; for which he had the most sincere affection; and the inclination and bias of his will were strongly towards it: and as for the positive law, which forbid him to eat of a certain tree; his will was to observe it; his resolution to keep it; as appears from what Eve said to the serpent, tempting her; "God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die" (Gen. 3:3), which shows, that she and her husband believed what God had said; judged it to be reasonable to

hearken to it; and were determined to observe it: and man had also power to keep this covenant; being made after the image, and in the likeness of God; pure and upright, possessed of a clear understanding of it, a strong affection for it, and a full resolution to keep it; for it was not till sin took place, that the nature of man was weakened, and he unable to keep the law; "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh", &c. Or what man could not do in fulfilling the law, his nature being weakened by sin; for then, and not before, was it in such an incapacity. Though it should be observed, that man was not left to his liberty; it was not at his option, whether he would assent to the proposal in the covenant, and the condition of it; he had not an alternative given him, to agree or not agree, since obedience was due to God, whether he promised him anything or not. Wherefore this covenant differs from any covenants among men; in which the parties not only freely agree to make a covenant, but it is at the option of the one, whether he will accept of and agree to the proposal of the other. So that this covenant made with Adam, is not strictly and properly a covenant, such as is among men; but is rather a covenant on one side, as a covenant of promise is; and a covenant of God with man, rather than a covenant of man with God.

The obedience required of man in this covenant, was personal, perfect, and perpetual. It was personal; it was to be performed in his own person, and not by another for him; as is the obedience of Christ, which is not personal to them, who are made righteous by it; or as would have been the obedience of Adam, had he stood, as reckoned to his posterity; which, though personal to him, would not have been so to them; as his disobedience, by which they are made sinners, is not personal to them (Rom. 5:19). It was "perfect" obedience that was required of him, both as to parts and as to degrees; it was to be yielded to all the commandments of God, without exception, and to be performed in the most perfect manner; as to matter, all the commands of God, natural and positive, were to be observed; and as to manner, just as the Lord commanded them. And then this obedience was to be "perpetual"; it was not to be done for a time only, but always; life, and the continuance of it, depended on it; otherwise, if a stop was made in it, the law condemned, and the man became accursed; "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. 3:10). So that man was bound by it for ever, as a law; but as considered as the condition of a covenant, it was to be yielded to as such, until man was confirmed in his estate, as the angels are; and, as some divines think, until he had children arrived to an age capable of obeying or sinning.

Fourthly, The law given to Adam, as it had the nature of a covenant, it contained a promise in it, and had a sanction annexed to it.

4a. It contained a promise; which was a promise of life, of natural life to Adam, and of a continuation of it so long as he should observe the condition of it; just as life was promised to the Israelites, and a continuance in it, in the land of Canaan, so long as they should observe the law of God; for neither the law of Moses, nor the law of nature, made promise of any other than of a natural life. Some divines, and these of great name and figure in the churches of Christ, think, and indeed it is most generally received, that Adam continuing in his obedience, had a promise of eternal life. I cannot be of that mind. There is, indeed, an ambiguity in the phrase "eternal life"; if no more is meant by it than living for ever in his present life, it will not be denied; but if by it is designed such a state of glory and happiness, which saints shall enjoy in heaven to all eternity; that must be denied for the following reasons:

(1). Adam's covenant was but a natural covenant; and which was made with a natural man, as Adam is called by the apostle (1 Cor. 15:46,47), and which covenant promised no supernatural blessing, neither grace nor glory; for as for spiritual blessings, these the elect are blessed with only in heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 1:3).

(2). It was in another covenant more early than that of Adam's, in which eternal life was promised and secured; God, that cannot lie, promised it before the world began; and this promise was put into Christ's hands, even from all eternity; and the blessing itself was secured in him for all for whom it was designed (Titus 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:1; 1 John 5:10).

(3). Eternal life is only through Christ as the Mediator of the covenant of grace; it comes by no other hands but his; it is "through Christ Jesus our Lord"; he came to open the way of it, that "we might have life, and that more abundantly"; a more abundant, durable, and excellent life, than Adam had in innocence: Christ, as Mediator, had a "power to give eternal life" to as many as the Father has given him; and he does give it to all his sheep, that know his voice, hearken to him, and follow him (Rom. 6:23; John 10:10; 17:3; 10:28).

(4). If eternal life could have been by Adam's covenant, it would have been by works; for that covenant was a covenant of works; and if by works, then not of grace; it would not have been the gift of God, as it is said to be; "The gift of God is eternal life", ξαπιοπα, a free grace gift. Eternal life is no other than consummate salvation in the future state; and that is said to be of grace, and denied to be of works; (see Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:8,9). Should the question of the young man in the gospel, and Christ's answer to it, be objected (Matthew 19:16-22). "Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments"; it may be observed, Christ answers him, and deals with him on his own principles; the man was upon the bottom of his own good works, and seeking

for eternal life by them; and since he sought for life that way, Christ directs him to keep the commands, there being no good thing better than keeping them; the young man asked him what they were; he tells him; upon which he was very alert, and thought himself in a very good way for heaven: but Christ, further to try him, and to convince him that eternal life was not to be enjoyed by any good thing done by him, bids him, if he would be perfect, sell all that he had, and give to the poor; on which he went away sorrowful, unwilling to part with his possessions; and so found that eternal life was not to be had by doing.

(5). Life and immortality, or an immortal, eternal life, and the way to it, are only brought to light by the Gospel (2 Tim. 1:10), not by the light of nature, nor by the law of Moses; only by the Gospel of Christ.

(6). There is no proportion between the best works of man, even sinless obedience and eternal life; wherefore, though the threatening of death to Adam contains in it eternal death, it does not follow that the promise of life includes eternal life; since, though eternal death is the just wages and demerit of sin; yet eternal life is not the wages and merit of the works of men; it is the free gift of God (Rom. 6:23).

2. The sanction of the law and covenant made with Adam, was death; "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17), which includes death corporal, spiritual, or moral, and eternal.

(l). A corporal death; which lies in a separation of soul and body; as this was threatened, so the sentence of it was pronounced on the day man eat of the tree; "Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return" (Gen. 3:19). Adam was at once stripped of the immortality of his body, that gift was at once withdrawn from him, and he became a mortal man; the seeds of death took place in him; and he was immediately subject to diseases, disorders, and miseries, which issue in death.

(2). A spiritual, or rather moral death seized upon him; which lies in a separation of the soul from God, and communion with him; in an alienation from the life of God; in a deformation of the image of God; in a corruption and defilement of the several powers and faculties of the soul; in an impotency and disinclination to that which is good; he became dead in trespasses and sins, as all his posterity are.

(3). An eternal death, which lies in a separation of soul and body from God; in a loss of the divine presence, and in a sense of divine wrath; both which are contained in these words, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire"; a symbol of which was the ejection of Adam out of paradise; as eternal life is the gift of God, so eternal death is the wages of sin (Matthew 25:41; Rom. 6:23).

Fifthly, In this covenant Adam acted not as a private person for himself only, but as a federal head and representative of his whole posterity; and in this he was alone; Eve was not a federal head with him, he was alone, before an help meet was found for him; yet she was included in it, being formed out of him; and all his posterity, who spring from him; but the man Christ Jesus is to be excepted, since he descended not from him by ordinary generation, and was a Mediator, the Head of another and better covenant. But as to his natural posterity, it may be observed, there were many things which were common to him and them; and in which they had an equal concern; as in dominion over the creatures, the increase and propagation of their species, the food granted them, and the law of marriage (Gen. 1:28,29; 2:24). However, that in the covenant with him he was the federal head of them, appears,

1. From Adam being a figure or type of him that was to come; that is, of Christ (Rom. 5:14). Now in what was Adam a type of Christ, but in his being the federal head of his posterity? Not as a man; so all his sons might be: nor on account of his extraordinary production; for though that of both was in an uncommon way, yet in a different way; the one was created out of the earth; the other, though not begotten of man, was born of a woman, as other men be; but they were both covenant heads to their respective offspring; and the parallel between them as such, is formed by the apostle in the context of the place referred to; that as the one, Adam, as an head, conveyed sin and death to all his natural seed; so the other, Christ, as an head, conveyed grace, righteousness, and life to all his spiritual offspring.

2. From Adam being called the first man, and the first Adam, and described as natural and earthly, in distinction from whom, Christ is called the second man, and the last Adam, and described as spiritual, and the Ford from heaven; and these are represented as if the only two men in the world, because the two heads of their respective offspring.

3. From the threatening taking place upon the sin of Adam, not on himself only, but on all his succeeding offspring; as they were in him, they sinned in him; and death, the sentence of death, passed on them in him. In him they all died; through his offence death reigned over them, and judgment came upon them all to condemnation, and by his disobedience they were made, accounted, and charged as sinners (Rom. 5:12,15-19; 1 Cor. 15:22).

4. It was no unusual thing with God to make covenants with men, and their posterity, unborn; thus God made a covenant with Noah, and all that should descend from him, that he would no more destroy the earth with a flood; and with Abraham, and his natural seed, a covenant of circumcision, which should continue till the Messiah came; and the covenant at Horeb,

with the children of Israel, was not only with them that were then present, and on the spot, but with those that should be hereafter descendants of them (Gen. 9:9; 17:4; Deut. 29:14,15). And so the covenant of grace was made with Christ, as the Head of his chosen ones, who were considered in him, and had grace and all spiritual blessings given them in him before the world was.

5. Nor have any of Adam's posterity reason to complain of such a procedure; since if Adam had stood in his integrity, they would have partook of all the blessed consequences of his standing, and enjoyed all the happiness that he did; and therefore should not murmur, nor esteem it any injustice in God, in putting their affairs in his hand, that they share in the miseries of his fall; for if they would have received good things through him, had he stood, why should they complain of receiving evil things through his fall? And if this does not satisfy,

6. Let it be considered, that since God in his infinite wisdom, thought proper that men should have an head and representative of them, in whose hands their good and happiness should be placed; who so fit for it as the first man, the common parent of mankind, made after the image of God, so wise, so holy, just, and good? And could it have been possible for all men to have been upon the spot at once, and it had been proposed to them to choose an head and representative for themselves; who would they, who could they have chose, but the first man, that was their natural parent, of whose blood they were made; and who, they might reasonably think, had the most tender affection for them, and would take the greatest care of them, and of their good, put into his hands? So that it is reasonable to conclude, they would all to a man have united in the choice of him. But,

7. To silence all complaints and murmurings, let it be observed, that what God gave to Adam, as a federal head, relating to himself and his posterity, he gave it in a way of sovereignty; that is, he might, and might not have given it; he was not obliged to it; it was his own that he gave, and therefore might choose whom he pleased in whose hands to deposit it; and who can say to him, What dost thou?

Chapter 8

OF THE SIN AND FALL OF OUR FIRST PARENTS.

The law that was given to our first parents, and the covenant that was made with them, were soon broken by them; "They like men" (or like Adam) "have transgressed the covenant" (Hosea 6:7), they continued not long in their obedience to it, and in that state of integrity in which they were created; but sinning, fell from it, into an estate of sin and misery.

First, I shall consider the persons sinning, the same to whom the law

was given, and with whom the covenant was made; the common parents of mankind, Adam and Eve; first Eve and then Adam; for Eve was first in the transgression, and then Adam; though Adam was formed first, Eve sinned first (1 Tim. 2:13,14).

Firstly, Eve, she was beguiled and deceived by the old serpent the devil, to eat of the forbidden fruit, by which she sinned and fell from her original state; her sin may be thought to begin in holding a parley with the serpent; especially on such a subject as the forbidden fruit; she might have suspected that there was some design upon her, by introducing such a subject of conversation, and by so extraordinary a creature; and therefore should have broke off at once, and have abstained from all appearance of evil, from everything that tended, or might be a leading step unto it; though there is what may be said in excuse of her, that she took the question put to liar, to be a very harmless and innocent one; and to which, in the innocence and integrity of her heart, she gave a plain and honest answer: some have thought she failed in the account she gave of the law concerning the tree forbid to be eaten of; both by adding to it, saying, "neither shall ye touch it"; and by diminishing the sense of it, "lest ye die", or, "lest perhaps ye die"; as if it was a question or doubt with her, whether they should die or not, if they eat of it; whereas God had said, "Thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). But she is to be defended in all this; for though touching is not expressed in the prohibition, it is implied; since the fruit could not be plucked from the tree, nor taken in the hand, nor put to the mouth, without touching: besides, this may be considered as an argument of Eve's from the lesser to the greater, that if they might not so much as touch the fruit, then most certainly not eat of it. And as for the other phrase, "least", or "lest perhaps ye die", this does not always express a doubt, but the certainty of the event that would follow; (see Ps. 2:12). But her sin lay in giving credit to what the serpent said, "Ye shall not surely die"; in direct opposition to the word of God, "Thou shalt surely die"; which she now began to doubt of, and disbelieve; and for the strengthening of which doubt and disbelief, the serpent might take of the fruit, eat of it himself, and not only commend it as a most delicious fruit, but observe to her, that she saw with her eyes that no such effect as death, or any symptom of it, followed upon his eating it; and he might further suggest, that that superior knowledge and wisdom to the rest of the creatures he had, was owing to his eating this fruit; and that if she and her husband did but eat of it, they would increase and improve their knowledge, as to be equal to angels; and which, he observed, was known to God. Now upon all this there arose a lustful inordinate desire of eating the fruit, it being of so lovely an aspect, so good for food, and having such a virtue in it as to make wiser and

more knowing; so that at once there sprung up in her, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life": hence she inwardly sinned, before she eat of the forbidden fruit. Much the same progress may be observed in her sinning, which the apostle James observes of sin in common; "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin" (Jam. 1:15), for lust being conceived, she could no longer abstain, but took of the fruit, either from the serpent or from the tree, and eat of it, and so finished her transgression; and not content with eating it herself, but she gave to her husband to eat of it also; who either was with her, or at some distance, to whom she went directly, with some of the fruit in her hand, as may be supposed, eating it all the way she went; and when she came to Adam, held it up to him to look at, as most lovely to behold, and commended the deliciousness of it; and no doubt used the same arguments with him to eat, the serpent had made use of with her; and he hearkening to her, eat of it, and sinned also. For,

Secondly, That Adam sinned as well as Eve, is most certain; for though it is said, "Adam was not deceived"; the meaning is, that he was not first deceived, that he was not deceived by the serpent, but by his wife; and when she is said to be "in the transgression", the sense is, that she was in the transgression first; but not only in it; for Adam was also; hence we read of Adam's "transgression" (Rom. 5:14). And if he was with his wife when she eat of the fruit, as seems from the letter of the text (Gen. 3:6), he sinned in not attempting to detect the sophistry of the serpent; in not defending his wife from his assaults; in not persuading her not to eat of the fruit: in not warning her of her danger; yea, in not using his conjugal authority, and laying his commands upon her not to eat; for if he was present and silent, he must be criminal and accessory to her sin; but perhaps he was not with her. But his sin lay in "hearkening" to his wife, to her solicitations and requests, upon which it is put (Gen. 3:17). And she might urge, that they must be mistaken about the sense of the law; that God never meant by it that they should certainly die for eating the fruit, since she had eat of it, and was alive and well; by such insinuations Adam was prevailed upon to eat also. Though some think that he was not deceived by her; that he knew what he did, and what would be the consequence of it; he sinned with his eyes open; knew full well the sense of the law, and what would be the effect of it; but what he did was in complaisance to his wife, and from a vehement passionate love and affection for her; because he would not grieve her; and that she might not die alone, he chose to eat and sin and die with her: but then this was all very criminal; it was his duty to love his wife, as his own flesh; but then he was not to love her more than God: and to hearken to her voice more than to the voice of God. However Adam sinned, and his sin is more taken

notice of than the sin of Eve; and it is to his sin that all the sad effects of the fall are imputed; sin entered into the world by him, and death; in Adam all died; for he being the federal head of all his posterity, he sinned not as a single private person, but as the common head of all mankind (Rom. 5:12-19; 1 Cor. 15:21,22). Some have thought, that if Eve only had sinned, and not Adam, her sin would have been personal, and only affected herself, she not being a federal head with Adam; but she could not have been the mother of a sinless posterity; for "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" And she must have died for her offence; indeed God could have created another woman for Adam; from whom an holy seed might have sprung, had he stood. But this is all conjecture; nor is it so clear a point that Eve had no concern in federal headship; since though the law was given to Adam, and the covenant was made with him before she was formed; yet it was made known unto her, and she assented to it, and looked upon herself as equally bound by it, and shared in the same privileges Adam did; particularly in having dominion over the creatures; and she was, as he, the common parent of their posterity, the mother of all living; was one flesh with him, and both the one Adam (Gen. 5:2), the head of all mankind.

Secondly, How creatures, so wise and knowing, so holy, just, and good; made after the image and likeness of God, came to sin as they did, deserves an enquiry: To what could their sin and fall be owing? Not unto God; he is not the author of sin, nor tempts unto it; nor is he tempted by it: nor to Satan, only as an instrument, enticing and deceiving; but to themselves, to their own will, it was their own act and deed.

1. First, Not to God; he forbade it; was displeased with it; and resented it to the highest degree. Those who are differently minded from us, represent our sentiments about Adam's sin, as chargeable with making God the author of sin; which we abhor and detest. Let us therefore a little consider what concern God had in this affair; by which it will appear that the charge is false and groundless. And,

l. What he did not do.

(l). He did not restrain the serpent from tempting; nor withhold man from sinning. He could have kept the serpent out of the garden, and laid his commands on Satan, not to tempt our first parents; and he could have hindered the temptation from having any influence upon them; but this he did not: nor did he withhold Adam from sinning, which he could have done; as well as he withheld Abimelech from sinning against him, as he told him he had; and Laban and Esau from hurting Jacob; and Balsam from cursing the people of Israel; he could have done the one as well as the other; but he did not; nor was he obliged to it. And on the other hand, he did not

force nor impel either Satan to tempt, or man to sin; they both acted their part freely, without any force or compulsion. Satan, full of spite and malice, and moved with envy at the happiness of man, most freely and voluntarily entered into a scheme to destroy him, and with all his heart pursued it, and carried it into execution; and our first parents, with the full consent of their wills, and without any force upon them, took and eat the forbidden fruit; none of Adam's sons and daughters ever eat a heartier meal, and with more good will, or with greater gust, than our first parents eat the forbidden fruit; stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret pleasant.

(2). God did not withdraw any favour from man he had bestowed upon him, nor any power and strength to stand which he had given him; for when God does anything of this kind, it is by way of punishment for a preceding sin or sins; but no such punishment could be inflicted on Adam, because as yet he had not sinned; but God left him in the full possession of all the powers and abilities he had conferred upon him; so that he could have stood if he would; he did not indeed grant him new favours, nor give him additional power and strength, which he was not obliged unto; he gave him enough, had he made right use of it, to have continued in his integrity; and to have resisted every temptation. Now these negative acts of God could never make him chargeable with being the author of Adam's sin and fall.

(3). There are other things which God did do, or acts which are ascribed unto him, relative to this affair.

2a2a. He foreknew the sin and fall of Adam; as he foreknows all things that come to pass in this world, which none will deny that own the omniscience and prescience of God; and if God foreknew the most trivial and contingent events that befall any of his creatures; then surely such an event as the fall of Adam, so important in its consequences, could never escape his foreknowledge; now God's foreknowledge of things future flows from the determinations of his will; he foreknows that things will be, because he has determined they shall be. Wherefore,

(2). God predetermined the fall of Adam; this fell under his decree, as all things do that come to pass in the world; there is nothing comes to pass without his determining will, "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" (Lam. 3:37), nothing is done, or can be done, God not willing it should be done: that the fall of Adam was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God is certain; because the sufferings and death of Christ, by which is the redemption of men from that sin, and all others, were ordained before the foundation of the world; and which must have been precarious and uncertain, if Adam's fall was not by a like decree (Acts 2:23; 4:28; 1 Pet. 1:20), but then neither the foreknowledge

of God, nor any decree of God, laid Adam under a necessity of sinning; it is true, there arises from hence a necessity of immutability, that is, that the things God has decreed should unchangeably come to pass, but not a necessity of co-action or force; as Judas and the Jews sinned freely, the one in betraying, the other in putting Christ to death; so Adam sinned freely, without force or compulsion, notwithstanding any decree of God concerning him; so that these do not make God at all chargeable with being the author of his sin; he and he alone was the author of it.

(3). God permitted or suffered Adam to sin and fall, which permission was not a bare permission or sufferance; God was not an idle spectator of this affair; the permission was voluntary, wise, holy, powerful, and efficacious, according to the unchangeable counsel of his will: he willed, and he did not will the sin of Adam, in different respects; he did not will it as an evil, but as what he would overrule for good, a great good; he willed it not as sin, but as a mean of glorifying his grace and mercy, justice and holiness: and that this was not a bare and inefficacious permission, but attended with influence, is clear; because,

(4). There was a concourse of divine providence attending this action, and influencing it as an action, without which it could never have been performed; as divine providence supports every wicked man in his being throughout the whole course of his vicious life, and so while he is sinning; the same providence upheld Adam in his being, while he was eating the forbidden fruit; otherwise, as Eve could not have stretched out her hand and taken of the fruit of the tree and eaten it, so neither could Adam have put forth his hand and taken it of her. The influences of divine providence concur with every action, be it what it may, as an action, since all live, and move, and have their being in God; every action, as an action, is from God; but the obliquity, irregularity, and sinfulness of the action, is from the creature: wherefore God is not the author of any sin; as he is not the author of sin in any man, notwithstanding the concourse of his providence with every action of his, as an action, so neither of the sin of Adam.

(5). God may be said, by planting a garden, and that particular tree of the knowledge of good and evil in it, and by forbidding him to eat of that fruit, to afford an occasion of sinning to Adam; but had he not a right, as the Lord of the world, to plant a garden; and as a sovereign Lord to plant what tree he pleased in it, and to forbid the eating of it, without being blamed for it? Especially when he gave to Adam a power to abstain from it, had he made use of it; and God can no more on this account be chargeable with being the author of Adam's sin, than by giving wealth and riches to a wicked man, which are occasions of his sinning, by consuming them on his lusts.

Secondly, The concern that Satan had in this affair may next be considered; and what he did was not by force or compulsion, but by persuasion; he acted the part of a tempter, and from thence he has that appellation (Matthew 4:3; 1 Thess. 3:5), he enticed and seduced by lies and false reasonings, and so prevailed; he is said to beguile Eve, and to deceive the whole world, the representatives of it (2 Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9), in order to which he made use of a serpent, and not a mere form and appearance of one that he assumed; as is clear from its being reckoned one of the beasts of the field, and said to be more subtle than the rest, for which this creature is notorious; and from the curse denounced on it to go on its belly: and eat dust all its days; and yet it was not merely a serpent, or a serpent only, but Satan in it; as appears not only from its having the faculty of speech, which such creatures have not; but from its being possessed of reasoning powers, capable of forming an artful scheme, and of conducting it and carrying it into execution, so as to gain his point; and from the seduction and ruin of men being ascribed to the old serpent the devil (John 8:44; 2 Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9).

Satan showed great craftiness and cunning throughout this whole affair; in making use of the serpent, the most subtle of all creatures, which could easily creep into the garden unobserved, which some other creatures could not; and it might be a very lovely creature to look at, adorned with beautiful spots, and of a bright shining golden colour, which, when the rays of the sun struck on it, made it look very lovely, as such creatures in those parts are said to be; all which might recommend it to Eve: she might take particular notice of it, and have a particular fondness for it; it might be very familiar to her, she might wrap it or suffer it to wrap itself about her arms; and what might make her still more fond of it, was its faculty of speaking; whereby she could converse with it about indifferent things; and this familiarity might continue some time before Satan in it made his attack upon her; so that she was used to it, and it was no surprise to her to hear it speak. Satan's cunning also appeared in going to work with our first parents so early, as soon as they were well settled in their state of happiness, and when they had but just tasted of the pleasures of it, and before the habits of virtue and goodness were more strengthened, when it might have been more difficult for him to have worked upon them, and gained his point; as also in making his attack on Eve first, and when she was alone, and her husband not with her, to aid and assist, counsel and protect her. Nor did he discover himself to be what he really was; had he declared himself to be an apostate spirit, that had left his first estate, not bearing to be under the government of God, he was so cruel and tyrannical; had he set out with such outrageous blasphemy against God as this, the woman would have fled from him at once, with the utmost

abhorrence and detestation of him, which would have marred his scheme at once; but he begun, seemingly with owning the authority of God; and that he had power to forbid the use of any of the trees of the garden; and only questioned whether he had done so or not; he could scarcely believe that a God so good as he was, and particularly to Adam and Eve, had planted a garden for them, and stored it with all manner of fruit, that he would ever restrain them from eating the fruit of any of the trees, and especially would never inflict death upon them for so slight a matter as that; they must surely misunderstand him, and mistake his meaning: and after this, and more conversation, the woman began to doubt whether God had said so or not; or, however, that her husband had mistook his meaning, and had made a wrong report of it to her, who was not present when the law was given. Satan perceiving that he had gained ground, boldly affirmed, that though they eat, they should not die; and that God knew that such was the virtue of the fruit of that tree, that it would make them wiser and more knowing, even as knowing as God, at least as the angels of God: the woman by this finding that there were an order of creatures superior to them in knowledge, what with the lovely sight of the fruit, and the usefulness of it, especially to make wiser, took of it and eat, and prevailed upon her husband to do so likewise. And thus they sinned and fell, not through any force and compulsion, but through the temptation of Satan, and his seduction. Therefore,

Thirdly, The sin, fall, and ruin of man were of himself. It was not through ignorance and want of knowledge that Adam fell; he was created after the image of God, one part of which lay in wisdom and knowledge; he had no darkness, blindness, nor hardness of heart; he knew God, his Creator and Benefactor; he knew his will, he knew his law, and what would be the consequence of disobedience to it; indeed, he was not so perfect but that he might be imposed upon by the appearance of a false good, presented to his understanding, which his will made choice of, under a show of good: nor was it through a defect of holiness and righteousness in him; for "God made man upright", endued him with rectitude and holiness of nature, with a bias to that which is good, and with an aversion to that which is evil; but as he was made mutable, which he could not otherwise be, he was left to the mutability of his will, and so sinned and fell; which is that folly, or rather weakness, which the highest rank of creatures, in their original estate, are chargeable with in comparison of God, the Creator: should it be said, Why did God make man mutable? It might as well be asked, Why did not he make him God? For immutability, in the strict sense of it, is peculiar to God. Should the question be altered, Why did not he confirm him in the state in which he was created, as he confirmed the elect angels? To which it may be

replied, That it is not improbable but that he would have confirmed him, had he continued a little longer in his state of probation. But the truest answer is, that it did not so seem good in his sight; and to show his sovereignty, he confirmed the elect angels; but did not confirm, as not the rest of the angels, so neither man. And this should satisfy.

Chapter 9

OF THE NATURE, AGGRAVATIONS, AND SAD EFFECTS OF THE SIN OF MAN.

FIRST, The nature of this sin: It seems to have been brought on through inadvertency, thoughtlessness, and being off of guard; it began with doubting and disbelief of what God had said; appeared in an inordinate desire after the forbidden fruit; and in an unlawful curiosity of knowing more than he did: and in pride, affecting to be as God; at least to be upon an equality with angels.

The nature of it may be learnt in some measure from the names it goes by; it is called "sin", and the "sin", the grand "sin", the first and fountain of all sin among men (Rom. 5:12). It is called a "transgression" (Rom. 5:14), a transgression of the law, as every sin is defined (1 John 3:4), a transgression of the covenant, a breach of that; and what is more heinous than covenant breaking? To break covenant with men is a great evil; but to break the covenant with God is a greater still. It is called "disobedience" (Rom. 5:19), disobedience to the will of God, and to his law; and as obedience to God is well pleasing to him; so disobedience, in any case, is highly resented by him. It is often called the "offence" (Rom. 5:15,17,18,20), it being in its nature, and in all its circumstances, very offensive to God, and abominable in his sight, as all sin is; and in the last mentioned places the word used signifies a "fall"; and hence it is common with us to call this sin the "fall of Adam"; it being that by which he fell from a state of integrity, honour, and happiness, into an estate of sin and misery.

Secondly, The aggravations of this sin were, the place where it was committed, and the time when, with other things.

1. With respect to place; it was committed in the garden of Eden. Here man was put when he was formed; nor was he cast out of it till after he had sinned, and for that reason: here were all manner of trees for his use; and he was allowed to eat of them all excepting one, which was forbidden him; and not to attend to that prohibition was great ingratitude to his Creator and Benefactor, who had so richly provided for him; and in the midst of all which plenty he sinned. Had it been in a remote part of the world, or in a desert, where this tree grew, and where scarce anything else was to be had, it

would in some measure have extenuated the crime; but in a garden, where he had enough of everything, it was a very aggravated crime; and by how much the less that was which was forbidden him, by so much the greater was his crime in not abstaining from it.

2. With respect to the time when it was committed; that is, how long after the creation of our first parents. This cannot be precisely determined: some make the time after it too long, and others too short. Some think that the first Adam kept his state of integrity as long as the second Adam lived here on earth; but this is a mere fancy, without any foundation. Some have fancied that he fell on the tenth day of September, and they suppose the creation of the world began with that month; so that as Adam was created on the sixth day, his standing could be no longer than three or four days; and this is supposed for no other reason, but because the Jews in later times had their grand fast on that day; but that was not for Adam's sin, but their own; and had it been for that, it should have been general, and kept by all mankind, if at all. And others are of opinion that he fell the same day he was created; but the text of which it is founded will not support it (Ps. 49:12), since it speaks not of the first man, but of his sons, and those in honour, whose continuance in it is not long; and the word for "abideth" or "lodgeth", as some choose to render it, signifies often a longer duration than a night's lodging. However, it must be very early that man fell, since the account of his fall is very closely connected with what was done on the first day of his creation; and Satan is said to be a "murderer", that is, a destroyer of mankind "from the beginning" (John 8:44). Now this was an aggravation of Adam's sin, that he should be guilty of it so soon, having just received his being from God; placed in so happy a situation; and blessed with so much honour, power, and authority, and with so many indulgent favours; he and his consort taking their walks in the garden, no doubt, often "sung the praises" of their great Creator and kind Benefactor, in tuneful lays, in melodious strains; but, like some of their sons afterwards, "soon forgot his works". (He may have fallen toward the end of sabbath day or the seventh day after creation. Then Christ, the second Adam, could truly be said to have pre-eminence in all things, including the keeping of the sabbath. (Col. 1:18).

3. The sin of Adam was a complicated one; he sinned against light and knowledge, and when he was in full power to have resisted the temptation; he could neither plead ignorance nor weakness in excuse of his sin; it was the height of ingratitude to his Maker; it was affronting him in the highest degree, by disbelieving his word, and thereby making him a liar; it was intolerable pride, an affectation of deity, or of equality to God; a want of thought, of care, concern, and affection for his posterity, with whose all he

was entrusted. In short, it included all sin in it. For the laws of God are so connected together, that he that "offends in one point is guilty of all" (Jam. 2:10).

Some have laboured to make it appear, that Adam by his sin transgressed the whole Decalogue, or the law of the ten commandments, and no doubt but many, the most, if not all, were broken. Dr. Lightfoot expresses it thus, "Adam, at one clap, breaks both the tables, and all the commandments.

1. He chose him another God, when he followed the devil.

2. He idolized and deified his own belly, as the apostle's phrase is; his belly he made his God.

3. He took the name of God in vain, when he believed him not.

4. He kept not the rest and estate wherein God had set him.

5. He dishonoured his Father which was in heaven; wherefore his days were not long in that land which the Lord his God had given him.

6. He massacred himself and all his posterity.

7. In eyes and mind he committed spiritual fornication.

8. He stole that (like Achan) which God had set aside not to be meddled with; and this his stealth is that which troubles all Israel, the whole world.

9. He bore witness against God when he believed the witness of the devil above him.

10. He coveted an evil covetousness, which cost him his life, and all his progeny. "

Thirdly, The sad effects and consequences of this sin. The account of what befell Adam after his fall, is so short, that much is not to be expected from it; and besides, he was so quickly recovered by the grace of God, and brought to repentance for his sin, and had a better image restored to him than what he had lost; and had so early the revelation of the seed of the woman, as a Saviour from this and all other sins; so that the mischiefs that personally accrued to him, are not so manifest; but appear more clearly in his posterity. However, there are so many things said, and hints given, as may lead us plainly to observe some of the sad effects of this sin.

1. A loss of original righteousness followed upon it. God made man upright; but sinning, he lost the uprightness and rectitude of his nature; or the righteousness in which he was created; so that he because unrighteous, nay, full of all unrighteousness; hence it is that there is none of his posterity righteous, no not one. Now this was signified by the nakedness of our first parents, which was immediately perceived by them after their fall; for though it primarily respects the nakedness of their bodies, which was the same before the fall, but then was no occasion of shame to them; but afterwards it was; the reason of which was, because of the loss of their inward clothing, the

righteousness and holiness of their nature; the want of which the nakedness of their bodies was now an emblem to them of: and as Adam immediately betook himself to get something to cover himself with, so natural it is for men to seek to obtain a righteousness of their own, to cover their naked souls with; for to be self-righteous is as natural to man as to be sinful; and what men do attain to as a righteousness by their own works, is of no more avail than Adam's fig leaves were to him; cannot cover a body from the sight of divine Justice, nor shelter him from the stormy winds of divine wrath and vengeance; nor justify him in the sight of God; nor entitle him to heaven and happiness, nor introduce him into it.

2. Guilt on the consciences of our first parents presently appeared, and that in an endeavour to hide them selves from the presence of God among the trees of the garden. Guilt is the consequence of sin in all men; the whole world of Adam's posterity is guilty before God; and this is sometimes intolerable, and nothing can remove it but the blood of Christ. And from this consciousness of guilt, flow shame, fear, and hiding themselves from God; they were ashamed to appear before him; and sin causes shame in everyone, more or less, unless hardened, stupefied, and past all sense, and are like those that declare their sin, as Sodom: hence men choose to commit sin in secret, in the dark, that their sins may not be seen; nor do they care to come to the light, lest their deeds should be reproved. Fear followed upon a consciousness of guilt in Adam; "I was afraid because I was naked"; as there is in every man, more or less, a fearful looking for of judgment and indignation, even in the more audacious; yea, those daring creatures the devils themselves believe and tremble; and through guilt, shame, and fear, Adam hid himself, but to no purpose; there is no fleeing from the presence of God, to whom the darkness and the light are both alike; of what avail could the shade cast by the trees in the garden be to Adam, to hide him from the all seeing eye of God? And yet such a notion possesses his posterity; (see Amos 9:2,3; Rev. 6:15-17).

3. Loss and want of knowledge and understanding were soon perceived in him. The last instance, of hiding himself, betrays his ignorance and folly; as if the trees in the garden could secure him from the sight and vengeance of the Almighty; instead of gaining the knowledge he unlawfully sought after, he lost much of what he had; hence he is ironically and sarcastically upbraided with it; "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil!" And his posterity are represented as foolish, ignorant, and devoid of understanding; "There is none that understandeth" (Rom. 3:11). Though they may understand natural things and civil things, and somewhat of moral things, though not clearly and distinctly, at least so as to do them; to do good

they have no knowledge: but they understand not spiritual things, the things of the Spirit of God, which they neither receive nor know, because they are spiritually discerned. They know not God, so as to glorify him; and much less as in Christ: they know not Christ, nor the way of peace, life, and salvation by him: they know not the Spirit of God, his person, office, and operations; yea, men are as stupid as the beasts of the field, and in some things more so; man is born like a wild ass's colt, and is more ignorant, and less knowing, than the ox and ass, which know their owner; and than birds of passage, which know the time of their coming and going, when men know not the Lord and his judgments (Job 11:12; Isa. 1:3; Jer. 8:6, 7).

4. Our first parents, upon their sinning, were immediately obnoxious to the curse of the law, and it was pronounced on them, along with the serpent; though it is expressed as if it only concerned the body, and temporal things; in which strain run the several curses of the law afterwards; "Cursed shalt thou be in the city", &c. (Gen. 3:16-19; Deut. 28:15,18), yet they extend further, even to the wrath of God on the soul, both here and hereafter; for the curse of the law is no other than the sanction of it, death; and which, as has been seen, is death corporal, spiritual or moral, and eternal; Adam, upon sinning, was at once stripped of the immortality of his body, which God had bestowed on it, and became mortal, subject to diseases, and a corporal death, and so all his posterity; "In Adam all die"; and a spiritual or moral death seized on all the powers and faculties of his soul; his understanding darkened; his mind and conscience defiled; his affections inordinate; his will biased to that which is evil, and to every good work lifeless and reprobate, until restored by the grace of God; as every man is dead in trespasses and sins, until quickened. And eternal death is the just wages of sin, which is no other than the wrath of God revealed against all unrighteousness, and which comes upon the children of disobedience: and there are none of the sons of Adam but as such, and in themselves, are obnoxious to it; even God's elect are "by nature children of wrath as others" (Eph. 2:3). This is the grand curse, the flying roll in Zechariah's vision, that goes over the face of the whole earth, and cuts off the sinner on this and the other side; and which the wicked will hear at last denounced on them, "Go, ye cursed!" But the righteous will be saved from it, because Christ has redeemed them from the curse of the law, and delivered them from wrath to come.

5. Ejection out of paradise is another thing which followed on the sin of Adam; "So he drove out the man" (Gen. 3:24). An emblem of that alienation from God, from the life of God, and communion with him, which sin has produced, and which has set man at a distance from God; hence Christ suffered to bring his people near unto him; and by his blood they

that were afar off were made nigh unto God. And besides these, There are many others, which are the effects of the sin and fall of Adam; as a general corruption and depravity of all the powers and faculties of the soul, which are all immersed in sin, and full of it; and all the members of the body yielded as instruments of unrighteousness; a propensity and proneness to all that is sinful; an inordinate desire after the lusts of the flesh, and of fulfilling them; a serving of various lusts and pleasures; a serving lusts as pleasures, being lovers of sinful pleasures more than lovers of God. There is, moreover, a disinclination to all that is good, yea, an aversion to it; an hating the good, and loving the evil; yea, the carnal mind is enmity itself to God, and all that is good; and there is also an impotency, an inability to do that which is good; hence man is represented as without strength, having lost it, and become unable to do anything that is spiritually good; to which may be added, that sin has brought man into a state of slavery to sin, Satan, and the world; this is what we commonly call the corruption and depravity of nature, the effect of the first sin of Adam. This is the "pandora" from whence have sprung all spiritual maladies and bodily diseases; all the disasters, distresses, mischiefs, and calamities, that are, or have been in the world.

Chapter 10
OF THE IMPUTATION OF ADAM'S SIN TO ALL HIS POSTERITY

Having considered the disobedience of our first parents, and the sad effects of it to themselves, I shall next consider the concern their posterity have in it, and how much they are affected by it. There are two things follow on it with respect to them; the imputation of the guilt of it to them, and the corruption of nature derived to them from it.

I shall begin with the first, as being previous to the other, and the foundation of it, and which is expressed in very strong terms (Rom. 5:19). "For as by one man's disobedience man were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous". The apostle is upon the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ; and whereas it might be a difficulty in the minds of some, how any could be justified by the righteousness of another; and he had to do greatly with Jews as well as Gentiles; the former of which might better understand the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity; or how all men are made sinners by his sin, than the doctrine of justification by Christ's righteousness; he observes, it is as easy to conceive how men may be made righteous by the obedience of another, namely, through the imputation of that obedience to them, as it is to conceive how all men are made sinners by the disobedience of one man, even through the imputation of that disobedience to them. To

set this doctrine in the best light I can, I shall,

1) Observe the act of disobedience, by which men are made sinners.

2) Who they are that are made sinners by it.

3) In what sense they are "made" so through it.

First, The act of disobedience; whose it is, and what.

I. Whose it is: it is sometimes expressed by "one that sinned"; and more than once called, the "offence of one" (Rom. 5:15-16,18), and yet more clearly; "By one man sin entered"; and is called, "one man's offence", and "one man's disobedience" (Rom. 5:12,17,19), for it is not the sin of one of the apostate spirits, by which men are made sinners; but the sin of one of their own species, one of the same nature, even the common parent of all mankind, and who is expressed by name (Rom. 5:14), where this offence and disobedience is called "the transgression of Adam"; and so in (1 Cor. 15:22). "In Adam all die", being all in him, and having sinned in him, death comes upon them for it; but then this is to be understood of Adam not to the exclusion of Eve, who was also in the transgression, and first in it, and was the mother of all living. They both have the same name, the same appellative name, "man"; the same proper name, Adam (Gen. 5:1-2), were of the same nature; nay, Eve was formed out of a rib of Adam; was flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone; a part of himself; and by their marriage relation became one flesh (Gen. 2:21-24), they had the same law given them, which forbid the eating of the fruit of a certain tree; the same covenant was made with them, and they were both guilty of the same act of disobedience; and had a sentence of punishment pronounced on them both; and which did not rest on their own persons only, but is common to all their posterity, and still continues; which shows that their posterity had a concern in their act of disobedience, in the guilt of it, since they share in their punishment, as all the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve do; as in the toil and labour of the one, and his return to the dust; so in the pains of childbearing in the other, and subjection to the man.

2. What this disobedience was; which appears from what has been already said, it was disobedience to the law and will of God, in eating the fruit which he had forbid; so disbelieving the word of God, and giving credit to the serpent. Now it was this one act of disobedience, by which Adam's posterity were made sinners; and therefore is sometimes called the one sin,

and the one offence; so in Romans 5:16 some copies read, "by one sin"; and so in Romans 5:17 "by one offence"; and so Romans 5:18 may be translated as it is in the margin of our Bibles; it was a single sin, and the first sin committed in our world; I say in our world, because sin was committed before in the world above, in heaven, by the apostate spirits, the angels that sinned; but with their sin men have no concern; or they are not made sinners by it; but by that sin which first entered into our world, by the one man, Adam; and this the only one of his sins, and that which was first committed by him, and not any after sins of his; it is what, and it is the only one that was committed by him, while he stood the federal head of his posterity: that he was a covenant head to us has been proved already; and that he was such when this was committed by him is plain, because his posterity were then considered in him, as a federal head, and sinned in him, which brought death upon them all (Rom. 5:12). But no sooner had Adam committed this first sin, by which the covenant with him was broke, but he ceased to be a covenant head; the law given him, as a covenant of works, was no more so; the promise of life by it ceased; the sanction of it, death, took place; and he was no more in a capacity of yielding sinless obedience; and so could not procure life for himself and his; wherefore he no longer standing as a federal head to his posterity, they had no more concern with his later sins, than with his repentance and good works, both of which, no doubt, were performed by him; yet by his repentance they are not reckoned repenting sinners; nor are his good works accounted to them.

Secondly, Who they are that are made sinners by the disobedience of Adam. They are said to be many; not only Adam and Eve, who were transgressors, and so became guilty and polluted sinners, through their disobedience, as they most certainly did; as appears from their consciousness of nakedness; from the shame and confusion of face that covered them; from the fear and dreadful apprehensions of the wrath and vengeance of God; and from their fleeing from his presence, and hiding themselves; but even all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation, were made sinners hereby; for though they are only said to be "many", these many signify "all"; the reason of the use of this word, is to answer to the next clause, to the "many" that are "made righteous by the obedience of one Man"; and yet the "many" there, signify all that are in Christ, as their covenant head; even all his spiritual seed and offspring, given to him and chosen in him: and so all the natural seed and offspring of Adam, to whom he stood as a federal head, are all made sinners by his disobedience; which is thus strongly expressed, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that or in whom all have sinned"

(Rom. 5:12. And again, "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation (Rom. 5:18). I say, all descending from him by ordinary generation, are made sinners by his sin, and none else. Had God made more worlds than one, as he could if he would, and worlds of men too; yet as these would not have descended from Adam, they would have had no concern in his sin: had God raised up children to Abraham out of stones, which he could have done; yet such so raised up, in such a miraculous manner, and not descending from Adam, could not be affected with his sin; and for a like reason the human nature of Christ must be excepted from any concern in it, and from any effect of it, guilt, or pollution; for though he was a partaker of the same human nature, of the same flesh and blood with other men, and made in all things like unto them, yet not by ordinary generation; he was made of a woman, but not begotten by man; God, his Father, prepared a body for him in covenant; and in the fullness of time his human nature was formed by the Holy Spirit, in a wonderful manner; it was an extraordinary production; it was a new thing, which God created in the earth, and so an holy thing; was holy, harmless, and separate from sinners, without spot and blemish, and any consciousness of sin; and thus as it was clear of the taint and corruption of nature from Adam's sin, so it was exempt from the guilt of it; (see Luke 1:34-35). And besides that, Christ not descending from Adam by ordinary generation, could not be a federal head to him on that account; so neither because of the dignity of his person; the human nature being personally united to the Son of God, could never be under a creature as its federal head, or be represented by one.

Moreover, Christ was the head of another and better covenant than Adam's, and was previous to it, even before Adam and his covenant were in being. Christ was an head to Adam, as he was chosen in him, given to him in covenant to be redeemed and saved by him; but Adam was no head to him; "The Head of Christ is God", and he only (1 Cor. 11:3).

Thirdly, In what sense all Adam's posterity are made sinners by his disobedience.

1. Not by imitation, as say the Pelagians; men may become more sinful by imitation, but they do not first become sinful by it: men may, by example, be drawn in to commit sin more frequently, and to commit greater ones; and therefore the company of wicked men is to be shunned, since "Evil communications corrupt good manners"; especially persons of power and authority, their examples have great weight and influence; as civil magistrates, ministers, parents, and masters. So Jeroboam caused Israel to sin, was the occasion of it, and drew them into it by his authority and example. But this cannot be the case here; for,

l. Death, the effect of Adam's sin, and the punishment inflicted for it, takes place on such who never "sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression" (Rom. 5:14), namely, infants dying in their infancy; who, though not without the corruption of nature in them, yet without any actual sin committed by them, like to that of Adam's transgression; dying so soon, they have neither capacity nor opportunity of committing any sin similar to his; that is, any actual transgression; and therefore said, in that respect, to be innocent (Jer 19:4), not free from the taint, but from the act of sin. Now since death, which is the punishment of sin, takes place on them, that supposes guilt, or otherwise punishment could not in justice be inflicted on them; and as they are not made sinners by Adam's sin, through imitation of it, they must become guilty, or be made sinners in some other way.

2. Death, the effect of Adam's sin, and the punishment of it, takes place on such who never heard of it, and consequently cannot be made sinners by it, through imitation of it; for death passes upon all men, all nations of the world, and all individuals in it, through the sin of one man, Adam; even on such who never heard of the law which forbid the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge; nor, indeed, ever heard of the law of Moses, and the sins forbidden by that; are acquainted only with the law and light of nature; the law written in their hearts, according to which their minds, consciences, and thoughts, accuse or excuse one another; and yet they that are without law, perish without law, being sinners; and therefore as they cannot be made sinners by Adam's sin, through imitation of it, they must be made so another way; (see Rom. 2:12-15).

3. This sense makes a man no more a sinner by Adam's disobedience than he is by the disobedience of his immediate parents, or any other whose ill examples he follows. Adam seems to be too remote an ancestor to imitate; more likely immediate parents; and yet this is not always the case; children do not always follow the examples of parents, bad or good. Some may have evil parents, and, like the Jews, fill up the measure of their fathers' sins, and do as they did, and appear to be a generation of vipers: and others have good parents, who give them a religious education, and set them good examples, and yet they take very bad courses; and so not by imitation, at least of their parents. And indeed, sin in general does not come by imitation; but it is from a corrupt nature; and there are many sins which are never seen committed, yet are committed by those who never saw them; as murder, acts of uncleanness, &c. Did Cain sin by imitation when he murdered his brother? Did Lot's daughters sin by imitation when they contrived to commit incest with their father, and did? It is possible that all these defects in nature may meet in one man, as to be born blind, deaf, and dumb; and so not capable

of seeing and hearing, and knowing what sins are committed, and yet be as vicious as any of the sons of Adam.

3. Nor is the sense of the phrase, "made sinners by one man's disobedience, " what the more modern Pelagians and Arminians give into; that by a metonymy of the effect, sin being put for the punishment of it, men become sufferers, or are obnoxious to death, and suffer death on the account of Adam's disobedience; but this is to depart from the common and constant sense of this word, "sinners". Nor can any instance be given of the apostle's use of the word in this sense, either in the context or elsewhere; it always signifying a sinful, guilty, and defiled creature; one that is guilty of a crime, and obnoxious to death for it; it is contrary to the apostle's scope and design in the context, which was to show how death came into the world, namely, by sin; and to the distinction he all along makes between sin and death; the one he represents as the cause, the other as the effect; whereas this sense confounds cause and effect, sin and death, together; and makes the apostle guilty of such bad reasoning as can never be charged upon him, and which a man of such large reasoning powers, abstracted from his being an inspired writer, could never be capable of; for then the sense of these words (Rom. 2:12). "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned", must be, death passed upon all men, because it has passed upon all men; or all men are obnoxious to death, and suffer it, because they are obnoxious to it, and suffer it. Besides, it is granting us too much for themselves; it makes their cause indefensible, and even destroys it, and cuts the throat of it; for if men are obnoxious to death, even though but a corporal death, which is what they mean, and suffer such a death on the account of Adam's sin, they must have a concern in it, and be, in some way or other, guilty of it; or such a punishment, in justice, could not be inflicted on them. What greater punishment is there among men, for the most enormous crime, than death? And why should men suffer death for Adam's sin, of which they are in no sense guilty? Let this be reconciled, if it can be, to the justice of God.

3. Nor is the sense of the phrase, "made sinners by one man's disobedience," that Adam's posterity derive a corrupt nature from him, through his sin; this is indeed a truth, but not the truth of this passage; it is true that all men are made of one man's blood, and that blood tainted with sin; and so a clean thing cannot be brought out of an unclean; what is born of the flesh is flesh, carnal and corrupt; every man is conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, as David was; but then there is a difference between being "made" sinners, and "becoming" sinful, the one respects the guilt, the other the pollution of nature; the one is previous to the other, and the foundation of it; men receive a corrupt nature from their immediate parents; but they are not

made sinners by any act or acts of their disobedience. Wherefore,

4. It remains that the posterity of Adam are only "made" sinners through the imputation of his disobedience to them. And this imputation is not to be considered in a moral sense, as the action of a man committed by himself, whether good or bad, is condemned and reckoned unto him as his own, whether in a way of praise or dispraise; as the zealous good work of Phinehas in slaying two persons in the very act of sin, was "counted unto him for righteousness"; that is, was judged, reckoned, and esteemed a righteous, worthy, and commendable action; but in a "forensic", judicial, and legal sense; as when one man's debts are in a legal way placed to the account of another, as if they were his, though not personally contracted by him. An instance of this we have in the apostle Paul, who said to Philemon, concerning Onesimus; "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee anything", "let it be imputed to me", or placed to and put on my account. And thus the posterity of Adam are made sinners by Adam's disobedience, that being imputed to them, and put to their account, as if it had been committed by them personally, though it was not. And this sense is to be confirmed and illustrated,

1. From the signification of the word here used, "constituted" in a judicial way, ordered and appointed in the dispensation of things, that so it should be; just as Christ was made sin, or a sinner by imputation, by the constitution of God, laying upon him, reckoning, placing to his account the sins of all his people, and dealing with him as though he was the guilty person, and as if he had committed the sins, though he had not; and not imputing trespasses to them, though they were the actual transgressors; (see Isa. 53:6; 2 Cor. 5:19,21).

2. From its being the disobedience of another, by which men are made sinners; and therefore they can in no other way be made sinners by it, than by the imputation of it to them; just as the righteousness of Christ being not our own, but his, another's; we cannot be made righteous by it, but by the imputation of it to us.

3. From the punishment inflicted on persons for it. The punishment threatened to Adam in case of disobedience to the law and will of God, was death (Gen. 2:17), which includes death, corporal, moral, and eternal; a corporal death has been taken notice of already, and which is allowed to be suffered on account of the sin of Adam; and if so there must be guilt; and that guilt must be made over to the sufferer; and which can be done in no other way than by the imputation of it. A moral death is no other than the loss of the image of God in man, which consisted in righteousness and holiness; and particularly it is a loss of original righteousness: in the room

of which succeeded unrighteousness and unholiness; and is both a sin, and a punishment for sin: it is a sin as it has malignity in it, and a punishment for sin; and so it was threatened to Adam, and came upon him as such; and so to all his posterity, by the ordination and appointment of God; for which there can be no other foundation but the imputation of Adam's disobedience to them; nor can anything else vindicate the righteousness of God; for if the law of nature was sufficient, why should this original taint infect men, rather than the sins of immediate parents? Now if this comes upon men as a punishment, it supposes preceding sin; and what can that be but Adam's disobedience, the guilt of which must be made over to Adam's posterity, or it could not in justice take place; and that could no other way be made over to them but by imputation. And if eternal death is taken in to the punishment, as it must be; for the wages of sin is death, even death eternal; and this can never be inflicted on guiltless persons; if men are thus punished for Adam's sin, the guilt of that sin must be imputed to them: in Romans 5:18 it is said, "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation"; that is, the righteous sentence of God passed upon the whole posterity of Adam, to the condemnation of them for his offence; be that condemnation to a corporal, or to a moral, or to an eternal death, to any or all of them, it supposes them guilty of that offence, and that the guilt of that offence is made over to them, and reckoned as theirs; which can only be done by imputation; or they cannot be righteously condemned and punished for it in either sense.

4. That this is the sense of the clause, "made sinners by the disobedience of one", appears from the opposite clause; "So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous": now the many ordained to eternal life, for whom Christ died, and whom he justified, are made righteous, or are justified only through the imputation of his righteousness to them; and he is made sin by the imputation of their sins to him (2 Cor. 5:21). In like manner are Adam's posterity, or all men, made sinners through the imputation of his disobedience to them. And this is the sense of this clause, notwithstanding what may be objected to it.

It is no objection, that Adam's disobedience or sin is not now in act; as soon as it was committed as an act, it ceased; and therefore not to be imputed. The same may be objected to the obedience of Christ; or rather a course of obedience, a series of actions, which when performed, ceased to be in act; but then the righteousness arising from them continues; and is in Christ, The Lord our Righteousness; and is unto all and upon all that believe. And so Adam's sin, though it ceased to be in act, the guilt of it continues, and is imputed to all his posterity. In like manner the sins of the saints, before

the coming of Christ, ceased to be in act as soon as committed; and yet Christ died for the redemption of transgressions that were under the first Testament, and the sins of all the people of God were laid upon him by imputation. Nor is it any objection to this truth, that Adam's posterity were not in being when his disobedience was committed, and so could have no concern in it: but though they had not an actual being, yet they had a virtual and representative one; they were in him both seminally and federally; and "sinned in him" too (Rom. 5:12), as Levi was in the loins of Abraham, and paid tithes to Melchizedek (Heb. 7:9,10). I say, both seminally and federally; and it is their being in him seminally that is the foundation of their being in him federally, and makes it reasonable that so they should be; and this may be greatly illustrated and confirmed by modern philosophy, according to which all kinds of plants of the same sort to be produced in all following ages, were actually formed in the first seed that was created; and that all the "stamina" and "semina", not only of plants but of animals, and so of men, were originally formed by the almighty Parent, within the first of each respective kind, and to be the seed of all future generation: thus all mankind being formed in the first man, in this manner, it easily accounts for it, how they came to have a share in the guilt of his sin, and that to be imputed to them; as also to have the corruption and pollution of it derived to them. Nor does this act of imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, make God the author of sin; since this act makes men sinners not inherently, but imputatively; it puts no sin in them, though it reckons sin to them; and though this imputation is God's act, it makes him no more the author of sin, than the imputation of Christ's obedience, makes God the author of that obedience; as not God, but Christ, is the author of the obedience imputed; so not God, but Adam, is the author of that disobedience imputed to his posterity: nor is this doctrine chargeable with cruelty and injustice; it has never been reckoned either, that children should suffer for the sins of their parents; or rather, that parents should be punished in their children; God describes himself as a God visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him; and yet it is impossible that he should be guilty either of a cruel or unjust action: when Achan sinned, his sons and his daughters, and all that he had, were ordered to be brought forth, and they were all burnt with him. The Amalekites, for the injury they did to Israel, when they first came out of Egypt, Saul had orders, some hundreds of years after, to go and smite them, and utterly destroy all they had, men and women, infants and sucklings, and all their cattle: the blood of all the righteous persons that had been shed from the beginning of the world to the times of Christ, was then avenged on the wicked Jews. And such

a procedure in subjecting children to penalties for the sins of their parents, is justified by the laws, customs, and usages of all nations, who make treason punishable in the posterity of men. A nobleman, when he commits treason against his sovereign, he is not only stripped of his titles, honour, and estates himself, but his children are also, and reduced to poverty and misery, until the attainder is taken off. And if treason against an earthly king is punishable in this manner, then much more treason against the King of kings, and Lord of lords, as Adam's sin was.

The text in Ezekiel 18:2-4 is not to the purpose; that the proverb, "The father's have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge", should be no more used in Israel, but the soul that sins should die; since this speaks not a word of Adam, and his sin, nor of his posterity suffering for it; nor even of such men that commit the same sins their fathers have; but of good men and just men, that do not follow their fathers evil ways, and so shall not be punished for any sins of theirs, and is restrained to a certain case and time. The case of the man born blind, is also quite impertinent; since that also respects not Adam's sin, but the sin of the man and his parents, and a particular disaster, blindness. The disciples put this question to Christ upon it; "Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Christ's answer is, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents": not but that they had both sinned, but their sin was not the cause and reason of his blindness; but the sovereign will and pleasure of God, "That the works of God should be made manifest in him"; that there might be an opportunity for Christ to give proof of his Deity and Messiahship, by performing such a cure as was never heard of before (John 9:2,3).

To close this point; let it be observed, that the ground of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, is not his being the natural head, and common parent of them; for so are immediate parents to their respective offspring; but their particular sins are not imputed to them; Adam, being the common parent of mankind, may be considered as the ground of the derivation of a corrupt nature to them; and yet the justice of that will not clearly appear without their being considered as made sinners by the imputation of Adam's sin to them: but the ground of this imputation is the federal headship of Adam, or his standing as a covenant head to all his posterity; so that what he did as such, is reckoned as if done by them; which is not the case of immediate parents; and therefore their sins are not imputed: that Adam stood in the relation of a federal head to his posterity, has been proved in a former chapter, and vindicated from exceptions to it.

Chapter 11

OF THE OF THE CORRUPTION OF HUMAN NATURE.

Having proved the imputation of the guilt of Adam's sin to his posterity, what follows upon this is, the corruption of nature derived unto them from him; by which is meant, the general depravity of mankind, of all the individuals of human nature, and of all the powers and faculties of the soul, and members of the body.

First, I shall prove that there is such a depravity and corruption of mankind.

1. The heathens themselves have acknowledged and lamented it; they assert, that no man is born without sin; that every man is naturally vicious; that there is an evil disposition, or vicious affection, that is implanted and grows up in men; and that there is a fatal portion of evil in all when born, from whence are the depravity of the soul, diseases, &c. And that the cause of viciousness is rather from our parents, and from first principles, than from ourselves: and Cicero particularly laments that men should be brought into life by nature as a stepmother, with a naked, frail, and infirm body, and with a mind or soul prone to lusts.

2. Revelation asserts it; the Scriptures abound with testimonies of it, affirming that no man can be born pure and clean; that whatever is born of the flesh, or comes into the world by ordinary generation, is flesh, carnal and corrupt; that all men, Jews and Gentiles, are under sin, under the guilt, pollution and dominion of sin; that the imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil, and that continually; that the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked; and that out of it proceeds all that is vile and sinful (Job 14:4; John 3:6; Rom. 3:9; Gen. 6:5; Jer. 17:9; Matthew 15:19).

3. Reason confirms it, that so it must be; that if a tree is corrupt, it can bring forth no other than corrupt fruit; that if the root of mankind is unholy, the branches must be so too; if the fountain is impure, the streams must be so likewise; if immediate parents are unclean, their posterity must be unclean, since a clean thing cannot be brought out of an unclean; and if God has made of one man's blood all nations that are upon the face of the earth, and that blood is tainted with sin, all that proceed from him by ordinary generation must have the same taint.

4. All experience testifies the truth of this; no man was ever born into the world without sin; no one has ever been exempt from this contagion and defilement of nature, "there is none that doeth good, no not one" (Rom. 3:10) that does good naturally and of himself; the reason is, because there is none by nature good; of all the millions of men that have proceeded from Adam by ordinary generation, not one has been found without sin; there is but one individual of human nature that can be mentioned as an exception

to this, and that is the human nature of Christ; and that is excepted because of its wonderful production, and did not descend from Adam by ordinary generation.

5. The necessity of redemption by Christ, and of regeneration by the Spirit of Christ, shows that men must be in a corrupt state, or there would have been no need of these. The redemption of men from sin, and from a vain conversation, supposes them to be under the power of sin, and the influence of it, to lead a vain sinful life; and if men were free from the pollution of sin, the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin would have been unnecessary; his being made wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption to them, implies that they were foolish and unwise, that they were unrighteous and unholy, and slaves to sin and Satan: regeneration and sanctification are absolutely necessary to a man's enjoyment of eternal happiness; "except a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"; and "without holiness no man shall see the Lord" (John 3:3; Heb. 12:14), but what occasion would there have been for man's being born again, or having a new or supernatural birth, if he was not defiled by his first and natural birth; or of being sanctified, if he was not unholy and unclean? (see 1 Cor. 6:9-11).

Secondly, The names by which this corruption of nature is expressed in scripture deserve notice, since they not only serve to give more light into the nature of it, but also to confirm it; it is often called "sin" itself, being a want of conformity to the law of God, and contrary to it; it is represented as very active, working all manner of concupiscence, and death itself; deceiving, slaying, killing, and as exceeding sinful, even to an hyperbole, being big with all sin, and the source of all (Rom. 7:8,11,13). It has the name of "indwelling sin"; the apostle speaks of it as such with respect to himself, "it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me" (Rom. 7:17,20), it is not what comes and goes, or is only a visitor now and then, but an inhabitant, and a very troublesome one; it hinders all the good, and does all the evil it can; and it abides, and will abide, as long as men are in this tabernacle, the body, and even in the saints, until the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved; it is like the spreading leprosy in the house, which was not to be cured until the house was pulled down, and the stones and timber carried into an unclean place: so the tabernacle of the body will not be rid of the corruption of nature, until it is unpinned and taken down, and carried to the grave. It is said to be the "law of sin", and a "law in the members"; which has force, power, and authority with it; it reigns like a king; yea, rather as a tyrant; for it reigns unto death, unless grace prevents it; it enacts laws, and requires obedience to them; and obedience is yielded to the lusts of it; men serve divers lusts and pleasures (Rom. 7:23; 8:2; 6:12; 5:21; Titus 3:3). Sometimes it

is called the "body of sin", because it consists of various parts and members, as a body does; it is an aggregate, or an assemblage of sins, and includes all in it (Rom. 6:6; Col. 3:5). Sometimes it goes by the name of the "old man", because it is the effect of the poison of the old serpent; it is near as old as the first man; and is as old as every man in whom it is; it exists as early as man himself does (Rom. 6:6; Eph 4:22). Very often it is called flesh, because it is propagated by the flesh, and is carnal and corrupt, and is opposed to the spirit or principle of grace, which is from the Spirit of God; and in which no good thing, nothing that is spiritual, dwells (John. 3:6; Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:18,25). Once more, it is named, "lust" or "concupiscence"; which is sin itself, and the mother of all sin; it consists of various branches, called fleshly lusts, and worldly lusts, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (Rom. 7:7; Jam. 1:15; 1 John 2:15). The Jews commonly call it, the evil figment, or imagination.

Thirdly, This corruption of nature is universal, -

1. With respect to the individuals of mankind. Our first parents were, and all descending from them by ordinary generation are tainted with it. This corruption immediately upon the sin of our first parents, took place in them; as appears from the shame, confusion, and fear they were at once filled with; from their gross stupidity and folly, in thinking to hide themselves from God among the trees of the garden; from their attempts to conceal, palliate, and excuse their sin, the woman by laying the blame on the serpent, the man on the woman, and ultimately on God himself. Their immediate offspring took the contagion from them; the first man born into the world, Cain, the corruption of nature soon appeared in him, in his wrathful and envious countenance, when his brother's sacrifice was preferred to his; nor could he be easy until he had shed his brother's blood, which he did: and though Abel is called righteous Abel, as he was, through the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, and on account of the new man created in him unto righteousness and true holiness; in consequence of which he lived soberly and righteously; yet he was not without sin, or otherwise why did he offer sacrifice, and by faith looked to the sacrifice of Christ, which was to be offered up to make atonement for his sins, and those of others? In the room of Abel, whom Cain slew, God raised up another seed to Adam, whom he begot in his own likeness, after his image; not in the likeness and image of God, in which Adam was created; but in that which he had brought upon himself, through his sin and fall: the posterity of this man, and of Cain, peopled and filled the whole world before the flood. And what is the account that is given of them? It is this, that the earth was corrupt through them; that all flesh had corrupted his way on the earth; and that only one man found

grace in the sight of God; and that the imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually (Gen. 4:25; 5:3; 6:5,8,11,12). And as for the inhabitants of the new world, who sprung from Noah and his three sons, who descended in a right line from Seth, much the same is said of them (Gen. 8:21). In short, all nations of the earth, which may be divided into Jews and Gentiles, and which include the whole, are all under sin, under the guilt and pollution of it; not the Gentiles only, whose times of ignorance God winked at, and whom he suffered to walk in their own ways, which were sinful ones; but even the people of Israel, whom God chose to be a special and peculiar people, these were always rebellious, from the time they were a people; all the while Moses was with them; in the times of the Judges; and when under the government of Kings; as their several captivities testify; they were a seed of evil doers, a people laden with iniquity; in every age or period of time, whenever God took a survey of the state and condition of mankind, this was the sum of the account; "They are corrupt", &c. (Ps. 14:1-3; Rom. 3:9-12). The contentions, quarrels, and wars which have been in the world, in all ages, are a strong, constant, and continued proof of the depravity of human nature; "for these come of lusts that war in the members" (Jam. 4:1), which, as it is true of the war between flesh and spirit in the soul; and of the animosities and contentions among professors of religion; so of wars among nations, in a civil sense; and which have been from the beginning, and still continue: a quarrel there was between the first two men that were born into the world, which issued in bloodshed; and as soon as kingdoms and states were formed, and kings over them, we hear of wars between them. Look over the histories of all ages, and of all nations in them, and you will find them full of accounts of these things; all which have risen from the pride, ambition, and lusts of men. Yea, this depravity and corruption of nature has appeared, not only among the men of the world in all ages, but even among the people of God, and after they have been called by grace: there never was a just man that did good, and sinned not; in many things, in all things, they sin and offend; in them, that is, in their flesh, their corrupt part, no good thing dwells: such that say they have no sin, deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them.

2. This corruption of nature is general, with respect to the parts of man, to all the powers and faculties of his soul, and to the members of his body.

(l). To the powers and faculties of the soul of man, to all that is within him; his heart is deceitful and desperately wicked; his inward part is wickedness itself; the thoughts of his heart are evil, vain, and sinful; yea, the imagination of the thoughts of his heart, the very substratum of thought, the first motions that are in man that way; the mind and conscience, are

defiled, and nothing can remove the pollution but the blood of Jesus: the understanding is darkened through the blindness and ignorance that is in it; so that a mere natural man cannot discern the things of the Spirit of God; whatever knowledge men have of things natural and civil, they have none of things spiritual; wise they are to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge; they know not, nor will they understand: the will is averse to that which is good; the carnal mind is enmity to God, and not subject to the law of God; nor can it be, without his grace; it is hard, stiff, obstinate, and perverse, until the stony heart is taken away, and a heart of flesh is given. The affections are inordinate, run in a wrong channel, are fixed on wrong objects; men hate what they should love, and love what they should hate; they hate the good, and love the evil; they are lovers of pleasures, of sinful lusts and pleasures, rather than lovers of God, good men, and good things. In short, there is no place clean, no part free from the pollution and influence of sin.

(2). All the members of the body are defiled with it; the tongue is a little member, and is a world of iniquity itself, and defiles the whole body; the several members of it are used as instruments of unrighteousness; several of them are particularly mentioned in the general account of man's depravity, (Ro 3:1-31 as the throat, lips, mouth, and feet, all employed in the service of sin.

4. Fourthly, The time when the corruption of nature takes place in man; the lowest date of it is his youth; "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Gen. 8:21), that is, as soon as he is capable of exercising his reason, and of committing actual sin; and which, at this age, chiefly appears in lying and disobedience to parents; and this is said, not of some particular men, or of some individuals, but of men in general; and not only as in the times of Noah, but in all succeeding generations to the end of the world. This depravity of nature is in some passages carried up higher, even to a man's birth; "The wicked are estranged from the womb"; that is, from God, alienated from the life of God; being under the power of a moral death, or being dead in trespasses and sins; "They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies" (Ps. 58:3), that is, as soon as they are capable of speaking; and the sin of lying, children are very early addicted to; and this is said, not only of such who in the event turn out very wicked, profligate and abandoned sinners, but even such as are born of religious parents, have a religious education, and become religious themselves, are "called transgressors from the womb" (Isa. 48:8), that is, as soon as capable of committing actual transgression. David carries the pollution of his nature still higher, when he says; "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps. 51:5), which he observes, not to extenuate, but rather to aggravate, his actual transgression

he was confessing, in that he had been so early and so long sinful; and that whereas he was not ignorant of the corruption of his nature, and how prone he was to sin, that he should be no more upon his guard against it. He does not say, "my sin, and my iniquity", though it was his, being in his nature; but "sin" and "iniquity", being what was common to him with the rest of mankind; and what had attended him at the formation of him in the womb, and so before he could commit any actual sin; and therefore must design the original corruption of his nature; and that as soon as soul and body were united together he was a sinful creature. To this sense of the words it is objected, that David speaks only of his mother's sin; and broad hints are given that her sin was the sin of adultery. This shows how much the advocates for the purity of human nature are pinched with this passage, to betake themselves to such an interpretation of it, at the expense of the character of an innocent person, of whom nothing of this kind is suggested in the sacred writings; but, on the contrary, that she was a pious and religious person; David valued himself upon his relation to her, and pleads to be regarded for her sake (Ps. 86:16; 116:16). Besides, if this had been the case, David would have been illegitimate; and, by a law in Israel, would have been forbid entering into the congregation of the Lord, and could not have bore any office in church or state; nor did it answer the scope and design of David, to expose the sins of others, especially his own parents, while he is confessing and lamenting his own; nor does the particle "in" belong to his mother, but to himself; the sense is not, that his mother being in sin or that she in and "through sin" conceived him; but that he was conceived being in sin, or that as soon as the mass of human nature was shaped and formed in him, and soul and body were united together, he was in sin, and sin in him; or he became a sinful creature. Some who do not go the above lengths, yet suppose that the sin of his immediate parents, in begetting and conceiving him, though in lawful wedlock, is meant; but this cannot be; since the propagation of the human species by generation, is a principle implanted in nature by God himself, and so not sinful. It was the first law of nature, "Increase and multiply"; given in the state of innocence. Marriage was instituted in Paradise, and has been always esteemed honourable when the bed is undefiled. Besides, one of the words used, translated "shapen", is in the passive form, and respects what neither David nor his parents could be active in; and the whole refers to the amazing work of his formation, which he so much admires, (Ps 139:14-16. It is objected by others, that he goes no higher than his mother; and takes no notice of Adam. Nor was there any need of it; for since the corruption of nature goes in the channel of generation, he had no occasion, in speaking of that, to take notice of any other but his immediate parents, through whom it

was conveyed to him: it is further urged, that David speaks not of other men, only of himself. But that all mankind are corrupted in the same manner, other passages are full and express for it (Job 14:4; John 3:6; Ps. 58:3; Eph. 2:3). And if David, a man so famous for early piety and religion, one after God's own heart, whom he raised up to fulfil his will, was tainted with sin in his original formation, then surely the same must be true of all others; who, after him, can rise up and say, it was not so with him? Lastly, some will have these words to be figurative and hyperbolical, and only mean, that he had often sinned from his youth: but men, in confessing sin, do not usually exaggerate it, but declare it plainly, ingenuously, just as it is; and, indeed, the sinfulness of nature, cannot well be hyperbolized; and, if such a figure was attempted, it might be allowed of, without lowering it; (see Rom. 7:13).

Fifthly, The way and manner in which the corruption of nature is conveyed to men, as to become sinful by it.

1. It cannot be of God, or by infusion from him; he is of purer eyes than to behold it; he has no pleasure in it; it is abominable to him, and therefore would never infuse and implant it in the nature of men. Some of the ancient heretics fancied, there were two first principles, or beings; the one good, and the other evil; and that all that is good comes from the one; and all that is evil from the other: but this is to make two first causes, and so two gods; and those diametrically opposite to each other.

2. Nor can it be by imitation of parents, either first or immediate; there are some who never sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, and yet die; which they would not, were they not guilty and polluted; there are many born into the world who never knew their immediate parents, and therefore could not imitate them. Some their fathers die before they are born; and some lose both parents before capable of imitation; and if the taint is at their formation, and before their birth, it is impossible to be by imitation.

3. Nor does this come to pass through souls being in a pre-existent state. Some of the heathen philosophers, as Pythagoras and Plato, held a pre-existence of souls before the world was; and which notion was adopted by Origen, who held, that souls in this pre-existent state sinned each separately for themselves; and for their sins were thrust in time into human bodies, or into others, in which they suffer. Some think this notion was embraced by some of the Jews in Christ's time, and even by some of his followers; as is urged from John 9:1-3 but then it is not allowed of by him. And some modern Christians have imbibed the same heathenish and Jewish notion; who, observing that some passages of scripture speak of the pre-existence of Christ, in his divine nature, or as a divine Person, have interpreted them of

the pre- existence of his human soul; and have proceeded to assert the pre-existence of all souls, but without any colour of reason or scripture authority.

4. Nor is this to be accounted for by the traduction of the soul from immediate parents; or by the generation of it, together with the body, from them. Could this indeed be established, it would greatly remove the difficulty which attends the doctrine of the propagation of the corruption of nature by natural generation; hence Austin was once inclined to it on this account; but it is so big with absurdities, as has been seen in a preceding chapter, that it cannot be admitted; as, that spirit is educed out of matter, and generated from it, and therefore must be material, corruptible, and mortal; for whatever is generated is corruptible, and consequently the soul is not immortal; a doctrine never to be given up: and, besides, according to the Scriptures, the soul is immediately created by God (Zech. 12:1; Heb. 12:9). That this corruption of nature is conveyed by generation, seems certain; (see Job 14:4; John 3:6; Eph 2:3), for since nature is conveyed in that way, the sin of nature also must come in like manner. But how to account for this, consistent with the justice, holiness, and goodness of God, is a difficulty, and is one of the greatest difficulties in the whole scheme of divine truths; wherefore some have thought it more advisable to sit down and lament this corruption, and consider how we must be delivered from it, than to inquire curiously in what way and manner it comes into us; as a man that is fallen into a pit, does not so much concern himself how he came into it, as how to get out of it, and to be cleansed from the filth he has contracted in it. But a sober inquiry into this matter, with a due regard to the perfections of God, the sacred Scriptures, and the analogy of faith, may be both lawful and laudable. The difficulty is chiefly occasioned by the manner in which the case is put; as, that a soul that comes pure and holy out of the hand of God, should be united to a sinful body, and be defiled by it; blot if it can be made out, that neither of these is the fact, that the body is not properly and formally sinful, when the soul is first united to it, nor the soul pure and holy when created by God; that is, not in such sense as the soul of Adam was when created; the difficulty will be greatly lessened, if not entirely removed.

1. Let it be observed, then, that the contagion of sin does not take place on the body apart, nor on the soul apart; but upon both when united together, and not before: it was not the body apart in the substance of Adam's flesh that sinned; nor was the soul apart represented by him; but both as in union, and as one man, one person; for not bodies and souls separately, but men, were considered in Adam, and sinned in him; and so as the imputation of the guilt of his sin is not made to the body apart, nor to the soul apart, but to both as united; when, and not before, it becomes a son of Adam, a member

of him; so the corruption of nature, derived from him, takes place on neither apart, but upon them as united together, and constituted man. The body, antecedent to its union to a rational soul, is no other than a brute, an animal, like other animals; and is not a subject either of moral good or moral evil; as it comes from a corrupt body, and is of a corruptible seed, it has in it the seeds of many evils, as other animals have, according to their nature; but then these are natural evils, not moral ones; as the savageness, fierceness, and cruelty of lions, bears, wolves, &c. But when this body comes to be united to a rational soul, it becomes then a part of a rational creature, it comes under a law, and its nature not being conformable to that law, its nature, and the evils and viciousness of it, are formally sinful. It has before a disposition, an aptitude to what is sinful; and contains fit fuel for sin, which its vicious lusts and appetites kindle, when these become formally sinful, through its becoming a part of a rational creature; and these increasing, operate upon and gradually defile the soul. Should it be said, that matter cannot operate on spirit; this may be sooner said than proved. How easy is it to observe, that when our bodies are indisposed through diseases and pain, what an effect this has upon our minds; from the temperament and constitution of the body many incommodities and disadvantages arise unto the soul: persons that have much of the "atra bilis", or black choler in them, a melancholy and bodily disorder, what a gloominess does it throw upon the mind! And to what passion, anger, and wrath, are men of a sanguine complexion subject? And to what is insanity owing, but to a disorder in the brain? And to a defect there must it be attributed, that some are idiots, and others of very mean capacities, and very short memories; and where the bodily organs are not well attempered and accommodated, the soul is cramped, and cannot duly perform its functions and offices; and a man must be inattentive to himself, if he does not observe, that as by thoughts in the mind motions are excited in the body, whether sinful, civil, or religious; so motions of the body are often the means and occasion of exciting thoughts in the mind.

2. It is not fact that souls are now created by God pure and holy; that is, as Adam's soul was created, with original righteousness and purity; with a propensity to that which is good, and with power to do it. But they are created with a want of original righteousness and holiness; without a propensity to good, and without power to perform; and a reason will be given presently, why it is so; and why it should be so. And such a creation may be conceived of without any imputation of unrighteousness to God, and without making him the author of sin. It may be conceived of without any injury to the perfections of God; as, that he may create a soul in its pure essence, with all its natural powers and properties, without any qualities of moral purity or

impurity, holiness or unholiness; or that he may create one with a want of righteousness, and with an impotence to good, and without any propensity to it; since by so doing he does not put any fulness into the soul, nor any inclination to sin. And that the souls of men should be now so created, it is but just and equitable, as will appear by the following considerations: Adam's original righteousness was not personal, but the righteousness of his nature; he had it not as a private single person, but as a public head, as the root, origin, and parent of mankind; so that had he stood in his integrity, it would have been conveyed to his posterity by natural generation; just as he having sinned, the corruption of nature is derived to them in the same way; what he had, he had not for himself only, but for his posterity; and what he lost, he lost not for himself only, but for his posterity; and he sinned not as a single private person, but as the head, root, origin, and parent of all his offspring; they were all in him, and sinned in him as one man; so that it was but just that they should be deprived, as he, of the glory of God, that is, of the image of God, which chiefly lay in original righteousness, in an inclination to good, and a power to perform it; and, being stripped of this, or being devoid of it, an inclination to sin follows upon it, as soon as it offers; and in the room of it unrighteousness and unholiness take place; for, as Austin says, the loss of good takes the name of evil; and this being the case, how easily may it be accounted for, that a soul without any fence or guard, wanting original righteousness, be gradually mastered and overcome by the corrupt and sensual appetites of the body. And to all this agrees what a learned author well observes, "God is to be considered by us, not as a Creator only, but also as a Judge; he is the Creator of the soul, as to its substance; in respect to which it is pure when created. Moreover, God is a Judge, when he creates a soul, as to this circumstance; namely, that not a soul simply is to be created by him; but a soul of one of the sons of Adam: in this respect it is just with him to desert the soul, as to his own image lost in Adam; from which desertion follows a want of original righteousness; from which want original sin itself is propagated."

Should it be said, that though the justice and holiness of God are cleared from all imputation, in this way of considering things; yet it does not seem so agreeable to the goodness and kindness of God to create such a soul, and unite it to a body, in the plight and condition before described; since the natural consequence of it seems to be unavoidably the moral pollution of them both. To which may be replied, that God in this proceeds according to the original law of nature, fixed by himself; and which, according to the invariable course of things, appears to be this, with respect to the propagation of mankind: that when matter generated is prepared for the

reception of the soul; as soon as that preparation is finished; that very instant a soul is created, and ready at hand to be united to it, and it is. Now the law for the propagation of mankind by natural generation, was given to Adam in a state of innocence, and as soon as created, "Increase and multiply"; he after this corrupted and defiled the whole frame of his nature, and that of all his posterity. Is it reasonable now, that because man has departed from his obedience to the law of God, that God should depart from his original law, respecting man's generation? It is not reasonable he should, nor does he, nor will he depart from it: this appears from cases, in which, if in any, he could be thought to do so; as in the case of insanity, which infects a man's blood and family, and becomes a family disorder; and yet to put a stop to this God does not depart from the order of things fixed by him; and so in the case of such who are unlawfully begotten in adultery or fornication; when what is generated is fit to receive the soul, there is one prepared and united to it. And sometimes in this way God brings into the world some that belong to the election of grace; one of our Lord's ancestors came into the world in this way (Gen. 38:29; Matthew 1:3). What if Adam eats the forbidden fruit, and men drink water out of another's cistern, stolen waters, which are sweet unto them, and thereby transgress the law of God; must he forsake his own stated law and order of things? No; nature itself does not do so: a man steals a quantity of wheat, and sows it in his field; nature proceeds according to its own laws, fixed by the God of nature; the earth receives the seed, though stolen, into its bosom, cherishes it, and throws it out again, and a plentiful crop is produced. And shall nature act its part, and not the God of nature? He will; and the rather he will go on in his constant course, that the sin of men might be manifest, and that sin be his punishment. And in this light, indeed, we are to consider the corruption of nature; a moral death, which is no other than a deprivation of the image of God, a loss of original righteousness, and an incapacity to attain to it, was threatened to Adam, and inflicted on him as a punishment. And since all his posterity sinned in him, why should not the same pass upon them? And, indeed, it is by the just ordination of God that things are as they be, in consequence of Adam's sin, who cannot do an unjust thing; there is no unrighteousness in him; he is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works; and so in this. And here we should rest the matter; in this we should acquiesce; and humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.

Chapter 12

OF ACTUAL SINS AND TRANSGRESSIONS.

From the sin of Adam arises the corruption of nature, with which all

mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, are infected; and from the corruption of nature, or indwelling sin, arise many actual sins and iniquities; which are called in scripture, "The works of the flesh" (Gal. 5:19), or corrupt nature, in distinction from the fruits of the Spirit, or inward principles of grace and holiness; (see Gal. 5:17,22). These are the same with the "lusts of the flesh", and "the desires" or "wills of the flesh" (Eph. 2:3). The internal sinful actings of the mind will; even all manner of concupiscence, which lust or corrupt nature works in men, and which war against the soul: they are called sometimes, "the deeds of the body", of the body of sin; which, through the Spirit, are mortified weakened, kept under, so as not to be frequently committed, and be a course of sinning (Rom. 8:13 6:6). And sometimes, the deeds of the old man, the old principle of corrupt nature, to be put off, with respect to the outward conversation, and not be governed by the dictates of it (Col. 3:9 Eph. 4:21). Sometimes they are represented by corrupt fruit, brought forth by a corrupt tree; such is man's sinful heart and nature, and such the acts that spring from it: if the tree is not good, good fruit will not grow upon it: the heart must be made good ere good works can be done by men, (Matthew 7:16-20; 12:33). Those actual sins are the birth of corrupt nature, which is like a woman that conceives, bears, and brings forth; "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin" (Jam. 1:15; Rom. 7:5). Corrupt nature is the fountain, and actual sins, whether internal or external, are the streams that flow from it; "Out of the heart", as from a fountain, "proceed evil thoughts", &c. (Matthew 15:19), as is the spring, so are the streams; if water at the fountainhead is bitter, so are the streams; "Doth a fountain send forth at the same place, sweet water and bitter?" No.

Actual sins are deviations from the law of God; for "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). Actions, as natural actions, are not sinful; for all actions, or motions, are from God, the first Cause; from whom nothing sinful comes; creatures depend on him in acting, as well as in subsisting; "In him we move"; or otherwise they would be independent of him; whereas, "all things are of him". But an action is denominated good or bad, from its agreement or disagreement with the law of God, its conformity or disconformity to it; it is the irregularity, obliquity, and aberration of the action from the rule of the divine law, that is sin; and this whether in thought, word, or deed; for actual sins are not to be restrained to outward actions, performed by the members of the body, as instruments of unrighteousness; but include the sinful actings of the mind, evil thoughts, carnal desires, the lusts of the heart, "heresies", errors in the mind, false opinions of things, and "envyings", are reckoned among the "works of the flesh" (Gal. 5:20,21). And when we distinguish actual sins from original sin, we do not mean thereby that original sin is

not actual. The first sins of Adam and Eve were actual sins, transgressions of the law of God; "Eve was in the transgression"; that is, guilty of an act of transgression; and we read of "Adam's transgression", which designs the first sin he committed (1 Tim. 2:14; Rom. 5:14). And original sin, as derived from the sin of our first parents, is also actual; it is a want of conformity to the law of God, and is very active and operative; as it dwells in men, it works in them all manner of concupiscence; it hinders all the good, and puts upon doing all the evil it can; and is itself exceeding sinful. But actual sins are second acts, that flow from the corruption of nature. My business is not now to enlarge on particular sins, by explaining the nature, and showing the evil of them; which more properly belongs to another part of my scheme that is to follow, even "Practical Divinity". I shall therefore only treat of actual sins very briefly, in a doctrinal way, by giving the distribution of sins into their various sorts and kinds, reducing them to proper classes, and ranging them under their respective heads.

First, With respect to the object of sin, it may be distinguished into sins against God; sins against others, our neighbours, friends, and those in connection with us; and against ourselves; for which distinction there seems to be some foundation in 1 Samuel 2:25. "If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?" -

I. There are some sins that are more immediately and directly against God; all sin, indeed, is ultimately against him, being contrary to his nature and will; a transgression of his law; a contempt and neglect, and indeed a tacit denial of his legislative power and authority; who is that "Lawgiver that is able to save and to destroy". The sins of David against Uriah are confessed by him to be against the Lord; "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned" (Ps. 51:4). But there are some sins more particularly pointed at him, committed against him, in an open, bold, and audacious manner; "Their tongues and their doings are against the Lord" (Isa. 3:8). Such are they as Eliphaz describes, who "stretch out their hands against God" (Job 15:25,26), their carnal minds being enmity against God. Particularly sins against the first table of the law, are sins against God; such as atheism in theory and in practice; which is, a denying that there is a God, and strikes at the very Being of him: blasphemy of his name, his perfections, and providences; which is one of the things that proceed from the evil heart of man: idolatry, having other gods before him, and serving the creature besides the Creator; bowing down to, and worshipping idols of gold, silver, brass, wood, and stone: to which may be added, sensuality, voluptuousness, making the belly a god, and covetousness, which is idolatry: taking the name of God in vain, using

it on trifling occasions, and in a light and irreverent manner: cursing fellow creatures in the name of God, and swearing falsely by it, which is perjury: want of love to God, and of fear of him; having no regard to his worship, private and public; a profanation of the day of worship, and a neglect of the ordinances of divine service.

2. Sins against others, are the violations of the second table of the law; as disobedience to parents; not giving that honour, showing that reverence and respect, and paying that regard to their commands that ought to be: to which head may be reduced, disobedience to all superiors; the king as supreme, the father of his country; subordinate magistrates; ministers of the word, masters, &c. Murder, or the taking away of the life of another, is a sin against the sixth command, as the former are against the fifth; of this there are divers sorts; as parricide, fratricide, &c. Which last is the first actual sin we read of after the sin of our first parents: it seems as if the sin of murder greatly abounded in the old world, since at the beginning of the new, a special law respecting it was made; "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed" (Gen. 9:6). All sins of unchastity, in thoughts, and by obscene words and filthy actions, are violations of the seventh command, which forbids adultery, fornication, incest, and all unnatural lusts: taking away a man's property, privately or publicly, by force or fraud, by false accusations, and by circumventing and overreaching in trade and business, are breaches of the eighth command; and not only doing injury to the persons and properties of others, but to their good name, credit, and reputation, comes under the name of actual sins against others; for taking away a man's good name is as bad as taking away his money, and is next to taking away his life.

3. There are sins against a man's self; the apostle reckons fornication as sinning "against" a man's "own body" (1 Cor. 6:18), what is a pollution of it brings dishonour upon it, fills it with nauseous diseases, and weakens the strength of it. Drunkenness is another sin against a man's self; it is what deprives him of the exercise of his reason, impairs his health, wastes his time, his substance, and at last his body. Suicide is a sin against a first principle of nature, self-preservation. The Stoics applaud it as an "heroic" action; but it is a base, mean, and cowardly one; and betrays want of fortitude of mind to bear up under present adversity, and to meet what is thought to be coming on. However, no man has a right to dispose of his own life; God is the giver, or rather lender, of it, and he only has a right to take it away.

Secondly, With respect to the subject of sin, it may be distinguished into internal and external; sins of heart, lip, and life; or of thought, word, and action.

1. Internal sins, sins of the heart; the plague of sin begins there, that is the seat of it; it is desperately wicked, it is wickedness itself; and out of it all manner of sin flows; the thoughts of it are evil, they are abominable to God, and very distressing to good men, who hate vain thoughts; the very thought of foolishness or wickedness is sin. The imagination of the thoughts of the heart is evil continually; the very substratum of thought, the motions of sin in the mind, work to bring forth fruit unto death; the desires and lusts of the mind are carnal and sinful, which are various; the lust of uncleanness in the heart; the lust of passion, wrath, and revenge; the lust of envy, which the object of it cannot stand before, and which slays the subject of it; the lusts of ambition and pride; and which are thus summed up by the apostle, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life" (1 John 2:15).

Errors in the mind, false opinions of things contrary to the word of God; all unreasonable doubts, even in saints themselves; and all the actings of unbelief, which proceed from an evil heart, come under this sort of sins, internal ones, or sins of the heart.

2. Sins of the lip, or of words, which are external, openly pronounced, whether respecting God or man, and one another; as all blasphemy of God, evil speaking of men, cursing and swearing, lying one to another; all obscene and unchaste words, every sort of corrupt communication; all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking; all foolish talking and jesting, which are not convenient; yea, every idle word, comes into the account of sin, and will be brought to judgment; see (Eph. 4:25,29,31 5:4; Matthew 12:36,37).

3. Outward actions of the life and conversation; a vain conversation, a course of sin, the garment spotted with the flesh, right eye and right hand sins, and all that the members of the body are used as instruments in the commission of.

Thirdly, With respect to the parts of sin: they may be divided into sins of omission and sins of commission; when some things are left undone which should be done, and which are done when they ought not to be; such a distinction may be observed in the words of Christ, or however a foundation for it there is in them (Matthew 23:23; 25:42-44), and both these sorts of sins are very strongly expressed in Isaiah 44:22-24. Sins of omission are against affirmative precepts, not doing what is commanded to be done; sins of commission are against negative precepts, doing what is forbidden to be done; (see Jam. 4:17).

Fourthly, Sin may be distinguished by the principle from whence it arises. Some sins arise from ignorance, as in the princes of the world, that crucified the Lord of life and glory; in the apostle Paul when unregenerate, in persecuting the saints, and doing many things contrary to the name

of Jesus; and which he did ignorantly, and in unbelief; and in others who know not their master's will, and so do it not, and yet pass not uncorrected; especially whose ignorance is willful and affected, who know not, nor will understand, but reject and despise the means of knowledge, and say to God, depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways; the sins of others are presumptuous ones, and are done willfully, knowingly, and of choice, and who are worthy of many stripes; (see Luke 12:47,48). Some sins are through infirmity of the flesh, the power of Satan's temptations, and the snares of the world, which men are betrayed into through the deceitfulness of sin, and are overtaken and overpowered at an unawares, and surprised into the commission of them; and which is the case often-times of the people of God.

Fifthly, Sins may be distinguished by the degrees of them into lesser and greater; for all sins are not equal, as the Stoics say; and some are more aggravated than others, with respect to the objects of them; as sins against God are greater than those against men; violating of the first table of the law, greater than that of the second: and with respect to persons that commit them, and with respect to time and place when and where they are committed, with other circumstances; some are like motes in the eye, others as beams. Our Lord has taught us this distinction, not only in Matthew 7:3-5 but when he says, "He that delivered me unto thee, hath the greater sin" (John 19:11). And this appears from the different degrees of punishment of sin, which are allotted in proportion to it; so as our Lord speaks of some cities, where his doctrines were taught, and his miracles wrought, and repented not, that it would be "more tolerable for Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom, than for them" (Matthew 11:20-24). According to the laws of Draco, all sins were equal, and all were punished with the same capital punishment; the stealing of an apple, as the murder of a man. Hence it was said, that Draco wrote his laws, not in ink, but in blood. Not such are the laws of God; nor such the nature of sin according to them.

Sixthly, Sins may be distinguished by their adjuncts. As,

1. Into secret and open sins. Secret sins are such as are secretly committed, or sins of the heart; which none but God, and a man's own soul, are privy to; and some pass through it unnoticed and unobserved by the good man himself; and are opposed to presumptuous sins; which distinction may be observed in Psalm 19:12, 13. Others are done openly, publicly, before the sun, and in sight of all, without fear or shame. Some men's sins go beforehand to judgment; they are notorious ones; condemned by all, before the judgment comes; and others more secretly committed, they follow after; for all will be brought into judgment (1 Tim. 5:24; Eccl. 12:14).

2. The papists distinguish sin into venial and mortal: which cannot

be admitted without a limitation or restriction; for though all sin is venial or pardonable, through the grace of God and blood of Christ, and is pardoned thereby, excepting one, that will be hereafter mentioned; yet none are pardonable in their own nature; or are so small and trifling as to be undeserving of death, only of some lesser chastisement; for all sin is mortal, and deserving of death; "The wages of sin", of any and every sin, without distinction of greater and lesser, is death, eternal death, as it must be; for "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things", be they greater or lesser, "written in the book of the law to do them": if, therefore, every breach of the law subjects to the curse of it, which is death, then every sin is mortal. Yet,

3. Sin may be distinguished into remissible and irremissible. All the sins of God's people are remissible, and are actually remitted. God forgives them all their iniquities, and heals all their diseases, their spiritual maladies: and on the other hand, all the sins of reprobates, of abandoned sinners, that live and die in final impenitence and unbelief, are irremissible; "He that made them will not have mercy on them", to forgive their sins; "And he that formed them will show them no favour that way (Isa. 27:11). There is one sin which is commonly called, the "unpardonable sin", which is the sin, or blasphemy, against the Holy Ghost; and of which it is expressly said, that "it shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come" (Matthew 12:31,32). But not every sin against the Holy Ghost is here meant; every sin committed against God is committed against the Holy Ghost, as well as against the Father and the Son; he, with them, being the one God, against whom all sin is committed: nor is it a denial of his deity, and of his personality, though sins against him, yet they arise from ignorance of him, and are errors in judgment; and from which persons may be recovered, and repent of, and renounce: nor is a denial of the necessity of the operations of his grace on the souls of men, in order to their regeneration, conversion, and sanctification, this sin, for the same reasons: men may, and good men too, grieve the Holy Spirit by their sins; yea, vex him, as the Israelites; and yet not sin the unpardonable sin: yea, a man may break all the Ten Commandments, and not sin the sin against the Holy Ghost; it is a sin not against the law, but against the gospel; it lies in the denial of the great and fundamental truth of the gospel, salvation by Jesus Christ, in all its branches; peace and pardon by his blood, atonement by his sacrifice, and justification by his righteousness; and this after he has received the knowledge of this truth, under the illuminations, convictions, and demonstrations of the Spirit of God; and yet, through the instigation of Satan, and the wickedness of his own heart, knowingly, and willfully, and maliciously denies this truth, and

obstinately persists therein. So that as he never comes to repentance, he has no forgiveness, here nor hereafter. Not because the Holy Spirit is superior to the other divine Persons; for they are equal: nor through any deficiency in the grace of God, or blood of Christ; but through the nature of the sin, which is diametrically opposite to the way of salvation, pardon, atonement, and justification; for these being denied to be by Christ, there can be no pardon; for another Jesus will never be sent, another Saviour will never be given; there will be no more shedding of blood, no more sacrifice, nor another sacrifice for sin; nor another righteousness wrought out and brought in. And, therefore, there remains nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment and indignation, to come on such persons. Upon all which it may be observed, from what a small beginning, as the sin of our first parents might seem to be, what great things have arisen; what a root of bitterness that was which has brought forth so much unwholesome and pernicious fruit; such a vast number of sins, and of such an enormous size: what a virtue must there be in the blood of Christ, to cleanse from such sins as these, and all of them; and in his sacrifice to make atonement for them; and in his righteousness to justify from them! And how great is the superabounding grace of God, that where sin has thus abounded, grace should superabound!

Chapter 13

OF THE PUNISHMENT OF SIN

As to the punishment of original sin on those who, it may be thought, not to have added to it any actual sin and transgression, as infants, dying in infancy, I shall be silent; at least, say little. Not that I doubt of the right of justice to punish that sin on Adam's descendants, who have not actually sinned after the similitude of his transgression; since corporal death, a part of the punishment threatened, does pass upon them, and they are born with a want of original righteousness, a considerable branch of moral death; but if divine justice proceeds further, and inflicts eternal death, or everlasting punishment on them, I think it must be in a more mild and gentle manner than what is inflicted on those who have also been guilty of actual sins and transgressions; seeing, as there are degrees of punishment respecting them, as they are greater or lesser (Matthew 11:20-24) so there must be a difference of the punishment of original sin, separately considered; and of that attended with numerous actual transgressions. Many unguarded expressions have been dropped, concerning the punishment of such infants, as before mentioned, which are not at all to the credit of truth. Many conjectures have been made, and schemes formed, that are scarcely worth mentioning. Some have fancied that all such infants are lost; which seems to have something

in it shocking, especially to parents. And others think they are all saved, through the electing grace of God, the redeeming blood of Christ, and the regeneration of the blessed Spirit; to which I am much rather inclined, than to the former: but think it best to leave it among the secret things that belong to God; who, we may be assured, cannot do an unjust thing, nor do any injury to any of his creatures: and who, as he is just in his nature, he is merciful in Christ.

In this article I have nothing to do with men as elect or non-elect; but as they are all the fallen race of Adam. The elect, as considered in Christ, the Head of the covenant of grace, are not subject, or liable, to any punishment, here or hereafter; "There is no condemnation, to them that are in Christ Jesus": their afflictions are not punishments for sin; nor is corporal death inflicted on them as a penal evil; nor will any curse befall them in a future state. But my concern is with men considered in Adam, as the head of the covenant of works, and the representative of all mankind; as they sinned and fell in him, and were involved in the guilt of his sin; and as they are actual transgressors in themselves; and as they are chargeable with sin, according to the declaration, sanction, and tenor of the law; and considered as such, all mankind descending from Adam by ordinary generation, without any exception and distinction, are subject, obnoxious, and liable to punishment.

Punishment of sin, original and actual, may be considered as temporal and eternal; both in this life, and that which is to come. There is an everlasting punishment into which the wicked go after death; and there is a punishment in this life; "Wherefore should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin?" (La 3:37 that is, for punishment in the present state.

First, Temporal punishment, or punishment in this life, is due to sin; and is inflicted on account of it; and this is both inward and outward, or of soul and body.

I. Punishment inward, or of the soul, lies,

(1). In a loss of the image of God upon it; all have sinned and "come short", or "are deprived of the glory of God"; that is, of the image of God, in which his glory on man lay; one principal part of which image was righteousness and holiness. This man is stripped of, and is become unrighteous; "There is none righteous, no not one" (Rom. 3:10,23).

(2). In a loss of the freedom of will, and of power to do good. Man has not lost the natural liberty of his will to things natural; but the moral liberty of his will to things moral; his will is not free to that which is good, only to that which is evil; and that liberty is no other than bondage. Man's free will is a slave to his lusts; he is a home-born slave (Jer. 2:14). Man has lost his power

to do good; how to perform that he knows not; through the weakness of the flesh, or corrupt nature, he cannot do what the law requires; he cannot of himself think anything; and, without the grace of God, cannot do anything as it ought to be done; for he has no principle of life and motion in him to it; he is dead in trespasses and sins.

(3). In a loss of knowledge of divine things; his understanding is darkened with respect to them; he is darkness itself; he has lost his knowledge by sinning, instead of gaining more; "There is none that understandeth, and seeks after God, and the knowledge of him. Spiritual things men cannot discern; to do good they have no knowledge; they know not, nor will they understand. And many, through an habitual course of sinning, become hardened; and God gives them up to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart; to vile affections, and a reprobate mind, to do things not convenient; to strong delusions, to believe a lie; and to their own hearts lusts; and nothing worse can well befall men than that.

(4). In a loss of communion with God. Adam sinned, and was drove out of paradise, and was deprived of communion with God through the creatures; and all his sons are alienated from a life of fellowship with him: their sins separate between God and them; and, indeed, what communion can there be between light and darkness, righteousness and unrighteousness? The throne of iniquity, or where iniquity reigns, can have no fellowship with God, who commit sin as though they had a law to do it.

(5). In being destitute of hope, and subject to horror and black despair. The sinful soul of man is hopeless and helpless: men live without real hope of future happiness, and without God in the world; if their consciences are not lulled asleep, they are continually accusing of sin; the arrows of the Almighty stick in them; the poison of his wrath drinks up their spirits; and his terrors set themselves in array against them: having no view of pardon, peace, and righteousness by another, there is nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, are due to every soul of man that does evil, and to which he is liable; unless the grace of God prevents.

2. Outward punishments or of the body, or what relate to the outward things of life, are as follow:

(1). Loss of immortality of the body. Adam's body was gifted with immortality; but sinning, he was stripped of it and became mortal, and so all his posterity are; which arises not from the constitution of their nature, and the appointment of God, barely, but from sin; "The body is dead", or is become mortal, "because of sin" (Rom. 8:10), and it is liable, on the same account, to various diseases; they all have their foundation in and their

original from sin; God threatens men for it with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with extreme burning (Deut. 28:22), and these, with many others, are inflicted on account of it. To one cured of a disease Christ said; "Go home, sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee" (John 5:14), signifying, that his former disease came upon him for sin, and a worse would, should he continue in it.

(2). Labour of body, with toil, fatigue, and weariness, is another penal effect of sin. Though Adam dressed the garden of Eden, in his state of innocence, it was done without toil and fatigue; but when he had sinned, the earth was cursed for his sake, and brought forth thorns and thistles; and he was doomed to labour in it, to dig in it, to weed and purge it, to cultivate and manure it; and thereby to get and eat his bread in sorrow, and in the sweat of his brow. And this doom continues still in his posterity; man is born "to labour" as the sparks fly upward; so the word may be rendered (Job 5:7). The earth remains in such a state a requires cultivation, ploughing, sowing, weeding, &c. In which men must work with their own hands, in a toilsome and laborious manner, or in other arts, to get bread for themselves and families, and have wherewith to give to others. And it may be observed, that the punishment pronounced on Eve, that her conception and sorrow should be multiplied; and that in sorrow she should bring forth children, is continued in her daughters; and it is remarked, that of all the creatures, none bring forth their young in so much pain as women; and hence some of the greatest calamities and distresses in life, are described and expressed by the pains of a woman in travail; (see Gen. 3:16-19).

(3). Loss of dominion over the creatures is another sort of punishment of sin. Adam had a grant of dominion over all the creatures, and these were in subjection to him. But by sin man has lost his power over them; and many of them, instead of fearing and serving him, rebel against him, and are hurtful to him; he is afraid of coming near them, unless God makes peace with them for him, and preserves him from them; yea, the noisome beast is one of God's sore judgments with which he threatens to punish sinful men (Hosea 2:18; Ezek. 14:21).

(4). The many distresses in person, in family, and in estate, are the penal effects of sin; the curses of the law, for the transgressions of it, come upon men, and on what they have; in the city, and in the field; in basket, and in store; in the fruit of their body, and of their land; in the increase of their kine and flocks of sheep; when these are affected, and there is a failure in them, it is for sin (Deut. 28:16,20).

(5). Public calamities are to be considered in this light, as punishments of sin; as the drowning of the old world; the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah;

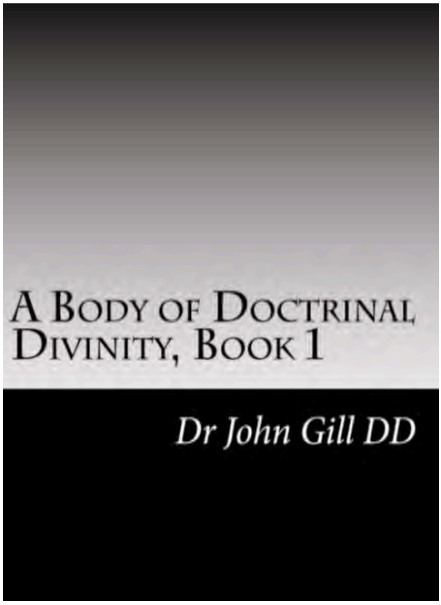
the captivities of the Jews; the destruction of other nations and cities; the devastations made by wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, &c.

(6). Last of all, as to outward temporal punishment, corporal death, which is the disunion of soul and body, is the just "wages" and demerit of sin; it was threatened in case of it, and it is inflicted for it; it came upon Adam, and it comes upon all his posterity; and sin is the cause of it; "The sting of death is sin"; sin gives it its destructive power and force, and makes it a penal evil.

Secondly, There is an eternal punishment of sin, or the punishment of it in the world to come for ever. This takes place in part on wicked men as soon as soul and body are separated; their souls, during their separate state, until the resurrection, are in a state of punishment; the wicked rich man when he died, "in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torment" (Luke 16:22,23). At the resurrection the bodies of wicked men will come forth from their graves, to the resurrection of damnation; when soul and body will be destroyed in hell, and punished with an everlasting destruction from the presence of God (John 5:29; Matthew 10:28; 2 Thess. 1:9). This punishment will be both of loss and sense; it will lie in an eternal separation from God, from any enjoyment of his favour, and fellowship with him; but such will have their eternal abode with devils and damned spirits; and in an everlasting sense of the wrath of God, which will be poured forth like fire; and both are expressed in that sentence, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire" (Matthew 25:41). Now this punishment is eternal; it is called everlasting punishment, everlasting destruction: everlasting fire; fire that is not quenched; the smoke of it ascends for ever and ever (Matthew 25:41,46; 2 Thess. 1:9; Mark 9:42; Rev. 14:11). The reasons of the eternal duration of punishment for sin, are, because it is committed against an infinite and eternal Being, and is objectively infinite, and requires infinite satisfaction, which a finite creature cannot give; and this not being given, punishment must proceed on "ad infinitum", and so be eternal. Could satisfaction be made, punishment would cease; but no satisfaction can be made in hell by the sufferings of finite creatures; which, therefore, must be continued until the uttermost farthing is paid, or full satisfaction made, which can never be done. Besides, the wicked in the future state, will always continue sinning, and be more and more outrageous and desperate in their blasphemy and hatred of God; and, therefore, as they will sin continually, it will be just that they be punished continually; to which may be added, that there will be no repentance for sin there, no pardon of it, no change of state; "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still" (Rev. 22:11). But of this more hereafter, towards the close of this work.

Now this punishment of sin, both temporal and eternal, is due to all the fallen race of Adam; to all descending from him by ordinary generation, without any distinction or exception, as they are considered in him, and transgressors of the righteous law of God. All equally sinned in him, and died in him; all are made sinners by the imputation of his disobedience to them; the guilt of which sin, and of their own actual transgressions, they are chargeable with: the whole world is become guilty before God; and which guilt in his sight, and as pronounced by him according to his law, is an obligation to punishment: all the transgressors of the law, as all men are, stand cursed and condemned by it; nay, "by the offence of one", of the one man Adam, "judgment came upon all men to condemnation"; so that all Adam's posterity are under a sentence of condemnation; and as considered in him, and in themselves, are subject, exposed, and liable to the above punishment; being all by nature children of wrath, one as well as another, deserving of it, and so liable to it; that is, to punishment: the reason why this punishment, to which all are subject, is not inflicted on some, is because of the surety-ship engagements of Christ for them, and his performance of those engagements; whereby he endured all that wrath and punishment due to their sins in their room and stead; and so delivered them from it, which otherwise they were exposed unto; the dawn of which distinguishing grace the next part of this work will open and display.

A BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY BOOK 1



A System of Practical Truths

Authored by Dr John Gill DD,

THIS IS BOOK 1

Treating The Subjects:
Of God, His Works, Names, Nature, Perfections And Persons. And Contains:
Chapters

1 Of The Being Of God
2 Of The Holy Scriptures
3 Of The Names Of God
4 Of The Nature Of God
5 Of The Attributes Of God In General, And Of His Immutability In Particular.
6 Of The Infinity Of God,
7 Of The Life Of God.
8 Of The Omnipotence Of God.
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12 Of The Love Of God

13 Of The Grace Of God.
14 Of The Mercy Of God.
15 Of The Long suffering Of God.
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20 Of The Holiness Of God.
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22 Of The Veracity Of God.
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24 Of The Sufficiency And Perfection Of God.
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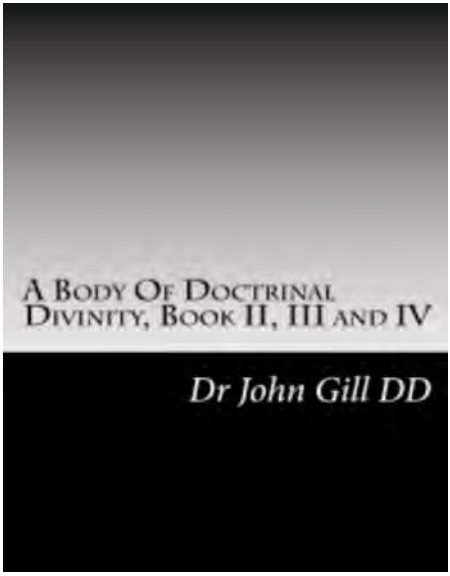
26 Of The Unity Of God.
27 Of A Plurality In The Godhead, Or, A Trinity Of Persons In The Unity Of The Divine Essence.
28 Of The Personal Relations; Or, Relative Properties, Which Distinguish The Three Divine Persons In The Deity.
29 Of The Distinct Personality, And Deity Of The Father.
30 Of The Distinct Personality, And Deity Of The Son.

A BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY II, III,IV.



A System Of Practical Truths

Authored by Dr John Gill DD.

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Chapter II Of The Special Decrees Of God, Relating To Rational Creatures, Angels, And Men; And Particularly Of Election.
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Chapter V Of Other Eternal And Immanent Acts In God, Particularly Adoption And Justification.
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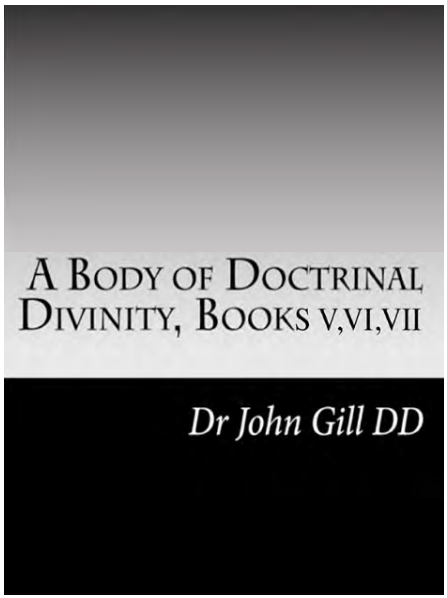
A BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY, V, VI,VII.



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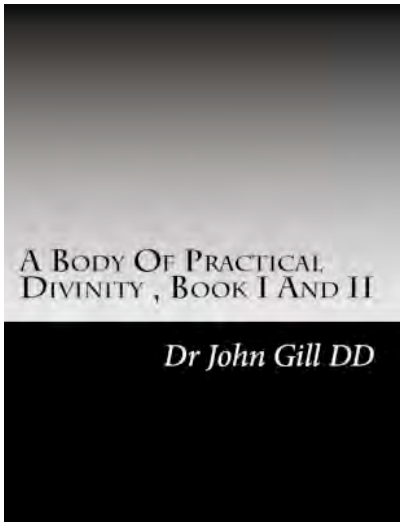

A System of Practical Truths

This reproduction of Dr John Gill's Body of Divinity is book I and II of Practical Divinity of total of V books.

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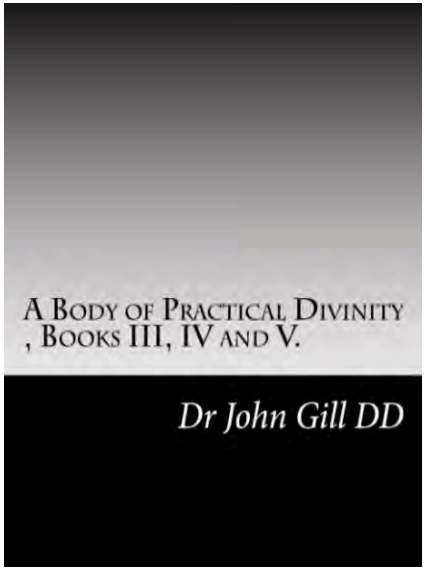

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Authored by Dr John Gill DD,

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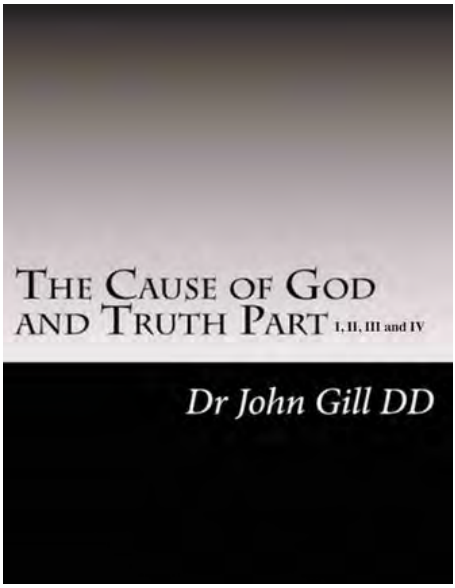

Authored by Dr John Gill DD, Created by David Clarke CertEd

It should be known by the reader, that the following work was undertaken and begun about the year 1733 or 1734, at which time Dr. Whitby's Discourse on the Five Points was reprinting, judged to be a masterpiece on the subject, in the English tongue, and accounted an unanswerable one ; and it was almost in the mouth of every one, as an objection to the Calvinists, Why do not ye answer Dr. Whitby ? Induced hereby, I determined to give it another reading, and found myself inclined to answer it, and thought this was a very proper and seasonable time to engage in such a work. In the year 1735, the First Part of this work was published, in which are considered the several passages of Scripture made use of by Dr. Whitby and others in favour of the Universal Scheme, and against the Calvinistic Scheme, in which their arguments and objections are answered, and the several passages set in a just and proper light. These, and what are contained in the following Part in favour of the Particular Scheme, are extracted from Sermons delivered in a Wednesday evening's lecture.

The Second Part was published in the year 1736, in which the several passages of Scripture in favour of special and distinguishing grace, and the arguments from them, are vindicated from the exceptions of the Arminian, and particularly from Dr. Whitby, and a reply made to answers and objections to them.

The Third Part was published in 1737, and is a confutation of the arguments from reason used by the Arminians, and particularly by Dr.

Whitby, against the above doctrines ; and a vindication of such as proceed on rational accounts in favour of them, in which it appears that they are no more disagreeable to right reason than to divine revelation ; to the latter of which the greatest deference should be paid, though the Rationalists of our age too much neglect it, and have almost quitted it ; but to the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them. In this part of the work is considered the agreement of the sentiments of Mr. Hobbes and the Stoic philosophers with those of the Calvinists, in which the difference between them is observed, and the calumny removed ; to which is added, a Defence of the Objections to the Universal Scheme, taken from the prescience and the providence of God, and the case of the Heathens.

The Fourth Part was published in 1738, in which the sense of the ancient writers of the Christian Church, before the times of Austin, is given ; the importance and consequence of which is shown, and that the Arminians have very little reason to triumph on that account.

This work was published at a time when the nation was greatly alarmed with the growth of Popery, and several learned gentlemen were employed in preaching against some particular points of it ; but the author of this work was of opinion, that the increase of Popery was greatly owing to the Pelagianism, Arminianism, and other supposed rational schemes men run into, contrary to divine revelation, This was the sense of our fathers in the last century, and therefore joined these and Popery together in their religious grievances they were desirous of having redressed ; and indeed, instead of lopping off the branches of Popery, the axe should be laid to the root of the tree, Arminianism and Pelagianism, the very life and soul of Popery.

This new edition, with some alterations and improvements, is now published by request.

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